THE

VIRTUOUS ORPHAN.

VOLUME THE FOURTH.

PART XI.

YOU muſt allow, Madam, that I could not well be more expeditious than I am now: I began the hiſtory of my friend the nun in my laſt Part, which you received laſt week; and I now ſend you the remainder.

As ſoon as the nuns had left us, and we had dined, I went into my friend's room, and deſired her to proceed with her ſtory: when ſhe reſumed—

'I had not been at Mr. Villot's above two or three days, before I wrote to my mother, to let her know where I was. In her anſwer, ſhe made uſe of ſeveral pretended reaſons to excuſe her not ſending for me; but promiſed to do it in a few days; but, not hearing from her, I wrote again; and continued to importune her with my letters till I grew weary, ſhe only evading it from time to time. At laſt, I found that, notwithſtanding her promiſes, ſhe had really no intention of ever having me near her: however, ſhe ſometimes ſent me a little money to buy me ſome cloaths; and allowed Mr. De Villot a trifle for my board; but though it was very inconſiderable, it did not make this generous friend look coldly upon me, nor abate the tenderneſs and reſpect of any of his family. As for my aunts, I hardly need mention them, ſince I ſaw them not above once or twice in a year at moſt, and never received any benefit from them.

'Here I got acquainted with four or five young ladies in the neighbourhood, who were agreeable companions; and ſpent my time almoſt entirely with them, till I was almoſt ſeventeen. I went ſometimes, too, to ſee an agreeable widow-lady of about forty, who lived at a caſtle about half a league from our borough: ſhe had been one of my mother's moſt intimate acquaintance, and was a perſon of an agreeable appearance; a genteel mien, and freſh complexion, with a good plight of body, gave her an air of beauty, which, joined to the appearance of the greateſt ſanctity and auſterity, together with an intimacy with all the devout in that part of the country, engaged the veneration and eſteem of every one; for there is ſomething more edifying in the piety of a fine woman than of any other. I was ſoon engaged by this lady's mild and obliging behaviour; and ſhe wrote to my mother to let her know that I frequently viſited her. As ſhe knew not what to do with me, and was unwilling ever to ſee me at Paris, leſt my country education ſhould mortify her pride, ſhe deſired this lady to inſpire me with a deſire of taking the veil. This ſhe undertakes immediately; and accordingly engages all the ſociety of religious, that they might contribute to the ſucceſs of her enterprize: ſhe immediately redoubles her careſſes and profeſſions of friendſhip; keeps me almoſt every night to

'ſup with her; obliges me frequently 'to lie in her houſe; and ſcarce can 'ſhe permit me to be a moment out of 'her ſight. Mr. and Mrs. Villot re-'joiced to ſee my affection for her; 'they commended me; and appeared 'to eſteem me much more on her ac-'count; and every body elſe ſeemed to 'do ſo too. Flattered with this gene-'ral applauſe, my devotion ſeemed to 'increaſe every day; and my mien 'gradually received an air of auſte-'rity: I ſoon became a partner in all 'this lady's exerciſes; ſhe ſhut herſelf 'up with me to read pious lectures; 'and carried me to hear all the ſermons 'ſhe could get intelligence of. "Ah, "my dear predeſtinated!" would ſhe 'ſay to me, (for ſhe and her pious 'friends then called me by no other 'name) "what an affecting ſpectacle "is the piety of ſuch an amiable girl "as thee! I cannot look upon thee "without praiſing God, and being en-"flamed with a more ardent love for "him." — "Oh, without doubt," 'cried her religious friends, "her "piety edifies us all! God has ap-"pointed her for a more holy ſtate: the "world ſtands in need of ſuch noble "and bright examples—And you, "child, will be a ſhining inſtance of "the triumphs of his grace." Theſe 'diſcourſes were accompanied with an 'air and tone which expreſſed the 'greateſt ſurprize, and the moſt pro-'found eſteem and veneration; while 'my preſence ſeemed to ſtrike them 'with a ſacred awe. I was pleaſed 'with being thus honoured; and the 'widow had great hopes of bringing 'me eaſily to comply with her deſigns. 'Her houſe was ſituated near a con-'vent, where we uſed to go once or 'twice a week: ſhe had a relation 'there, who was acquainted with her de-'ſigns, and promoted them with all the 'miſtaken zeal and monaſtick cunning 'ſhe was capable of; I ſay miſtaken, 'becauſe nothing, ſure, can be leſs 'pardonable than the little artifices 'they make uſe of to ſeduce a young 'woman into a deſire of being a nun; 'they ought rather to exaggerate the 'conſequences of ſuch an engagement, 'than prevent her ſeeing them. I ne-'ver went to the convent but their re-'ligious friend ſqueezed my hand, and 'ſpoke to me with a kind of holy ten-'derneſs; while the nuns flocked about 'me, gave me the moſt affectionate 'careſſes, and enchanted me with the 'pretty names they gave me, and the 'devout and ſimple graces which ac-'companied all their actions. I never 'returned from this convent but the 'widow ſpoke to me in raptures of 'the happy life thoſe girls lived there. 'While I was ſo delighted with their 'ſeeming agreeable and peaceful ſitua-'tion, that I was almoſt ready volun-'tarily to enter into the ſame ſtate, 'a new adventure, for that time, hap-'pily changed my reſolution.

'One day, as the widow was indiſ-'poſed, I aſked her to let her chamber-'maid go with me to the convent, to 'return a book I had borrowed of one 'of the nuns. The lady was ill in 'bed; and a young woman of about 'five or ſix and twenty, of a tall and 'genteel appearance, came to the grate. 'I had obſerved that ſhe always ap-'peared leſs chearful than the reſt, and 'had a countenance full of a melan-'choly ſoftneſs; and, though ſhe al-'ways ſpoke to me with the greateſt 'affability, ſhe was the only perſon 'that never gave me any friendly 'names. As ſhe then appeared more 'uneaſy than ever, I imagined that ſhe 'was not well; and told her I was 'ſorry to ſee her look ſo much out of 'order: ſhe ſaid ſhe had had a very in-'different night, and offered to call 'ſome of her ſiſters to keep me com-'pany. "No, Miſs," replied I; "I "cannot ſtay above an hour: beſides, "I ſhall ſoon have an opportunity of "ſeeing our good friends, without "being obliged to leave them."— "How! without leaving them!" re-'turned ſhe. "Have you, then, a de-"ſire to be one of us?" — "Yes; I "am more than half reſolved," replied 'I; "and intend to write to my mo-"ther, to let her know it. Your hap-"pineſs has made me deſirous of ſhar-"ing it with you," added I, putting 'my hand through the grate to take 'hers, which ſhe gave me without 'making me any anſwer. I then per-'ceived that the tears came into her 'eyes, and ſhe held down her head, 'as if to hide her concern. I was filled 'with a ſurprize which for ſome time 'kept me ſilent; when, recovering my-'ſelf, and looking upon her—"Tell "me, then," cried I, "why do you "weep? Was I deceived in thinking

"you

" you happy?" At the word Happy her
' tears redoubled; and I was touched,
' without knowing the cauſe of her af-
' fliction. At laſt, after many ſighs,
' which eſcaped her in ſpite of her-
' ſelf—" Alas, Miſs!" returned ſhe,
" I am not happy; but, pray, keep that
" a ſecret: and I beg you would never
" tell any body that I could not re-
" ſtrain letting fall ſome tears before
" you; and I will truſt you with the
" cauſe of them; it will not be unuſe-
" ful to you to know it." Here ſhe
' ſtopped to wipe her eyes. " Go on,
" my dear friend," cried I, weeping
' too; " and hide nothing from me.
" I feel myſelf afflicted at your un-
" eaſineſs; and I ſhall regard the con-
" fidence you repoſe in me as a favour
" that I ſhall never forget."

" You are deſirous of being a nun!"
' cried ſhe; " the careſſes of our ſiſters,
" and, I believe, the inſinuations of
" Mrs. De St. Hermieres," (this was
' the name of the widow) " make you
" inclined to enter into our ſtate: you
" fancy you have a call; though you
" would, perhaps, have never thought
" ſo, had you not been deceived by
" their allurements. Beware, Miſs,
" leſt theſe diſpoſitions vaniſh with the
" circumſtances which inſpire you with
" them! How dreadful would it be,
" ſhould you be miſtaken! We ought
" to be born with a reliſh for the pe-
" culiar duties of the convent, or elſe
" we cannot taſte any ſatisfaction in
" them. We have our troubles, which
" the world knows nothing of; and
" we ought to be born with a diſpoſi-
" tion to ſupport them too. I en-
" tered this convent at your age; and
" I was induced to it from the ſame
" motives as yourſelf. I had an af-
" fection for a nun whom I thought
" my friend; and, tenderly careſſed by
" all the ſiſters, I loved them ſo much,
" that I thought I could never be un-
" happy in their company. I was a
" youngeſt daughter; and all our fa-
" mily contributed to the charm that
" drew me hither. " How delight-
" ful," ſaid I to myſelf, " muſt it be
" to ſpend my time with theſe amiable
" ladies, whom it is a virtue to love!
" How ſweet will it be to employ my-
" ſelf in the ſervice of Heaven, in a
" peace and ſerenity ſo charming, ſo
" divine!" Alas, Miſs! what childiſh
" folly! Deceived in the ſituation of
" my heart, I fancied that it was piety
" prompted me to chuſe this retreat,
" when it was only the pleaſure of
" being with theſe dear girls, and taſt-
" ing the ſweets of their friendſhip.
" This was the childiſh attraction that
" brought me hither; this all my vo-
" cation: nobody had the goodneſs to
" undeceive me, and let me know the
" uneaſineſs that would follow. How-
" ever, this priſon began to grow bur-
" denſome, and I became diſguſted to-
" wards the end of my noviciate: but
" this, they affectionately told me, was
" only a temptation; and I had not
" the courage to reſiſt them. The day
" for my taking the vows arrived; I
" ſuffered myſelf to be prevailed upon;
" and did whatever they bid me, with
" an emotion which ſuſpended all my
" reflections: others decided my lot;
" and I was only a ſtupid ſpectator of
" the eternal engagements I took upon
" me!"

' Her tears began here to flow afreſh;
' and ſhe could not pronounce theſe
' laſt words without a voice interrupted
' with ſighs. Her affliction at firſt
' touched me: but here I was in a
' fright; her motives for entering the
' convent ſo exactly reſembled mine,
' and I ſaw my hiſtory ſo plainly in
' hers, that I trembled at the dangers
' I had eſcaped; and at once grew diſ-
' guſted at the houſe, as well as thoſe
' that were in it. After a ſhort pauſe,
' I thanked her for the confidence ſhe
' had repoſed in me; when ſhe again
' entreated me to conceal what ſhe had
' told me. I ſincerely promiſed I would
' do ſo; and my tears had ſuch an ef-
' fect upon her, that ſhe freely told me
' ſhe had other cares that I was a
' ſtranger to; and pulling a letter out
' of her boſom without any direction,
' ſhe gave it to me with a trembling
' hand—" Since my condition raiſes
" your pity," reſumed ſhe, " pray deli-
" ver me from the danger this note ex-
" poſes me to."—" But have you not
" already read it?" returned I. " Has
" it not been opened?"—" No," re-
' plied ſhe: " but I fear I ſhould have
" opened it, and was even going to do
" ſo, when my kind Genius brought
" you hither. My reſolutions are even
" now wavering; and I even regret my
" having given it you, and fain would
" have it again: but do not indulge
" me; and if you read it, I deſire you

" never

"never to mention the contents of it "to me. It comes from my mortal "enemy; from a man who is ſtronger "than my reaſon and all my reflec- "tions; a man who has loſt his ſenſes, "and would make me loſe mine; and "has already but too well ſucceeded! "It is ****!" Judge of my ſurprize, 'when I found it was an abbé, of 'ſeven or eight and twenty, whom I 'ſaw almoſt every day at Mrs. De 'St. Hermiere's! a man who aſſumed 'an air of the greateſt piety, and whoſe 'conduct I had hitherto thought alto- 'gether blameleſs! My aſtoniſhment 'was too viſible for her not to take 'notice of it immediately. "I know," 'reſumed ſhe, "that you ſee him "often: he has deceived me, and "perhaps himſelf too. He loves me: "but, pray, ſhew him this letter; tell "him that I have not read it; and let "him know that I will ſee him no "more; that pity for me, and a regard "to his own honour, ought to induce "him to leave me in repoſe. Alas! I "am unable to reſiſt his attacks," 'continued ſhe; "and cannot tell "what would be the conſequence "ſhould I ſee him again. I am capa- "ble of running away with him; of "taking away my own life; or of "any thing elſe. I foreſee that no- "thing but horror would attend his "deſigns; and we ſhould be plunged "in an abyſs in which we ſhould both "periſh!"

'This diſcourſe was accompanied 'with abundance of tears; and when 'ſhe had done, her countenance was ſo 'much altered, that I could hardly 'know her again. I wept with her; 'and we continued for ſome time 'ſpeechleſs: at laſt I broke ſilence, 'and endeavoured to calm the diſorder 'of her ſoul. "As you have a tender "and virtuous mind," ſaid I, "you "need not fear that Heaven will for- "ſake you in your diſtreſs; you will "ſoon triumph over your paſſion; "your trouble will vaniſh, and you "will be delighted with the reflec- "tion that you have abandoned a "wretch who would infallibly have "ruined you."

'The bell here called the young 'lady to her devotions; when ſhe aroſe 'haſtily, and, after deſiring me to fa- 'vour her again with my company, 'left me. What I had juſt heard had 'created ſuch a revolution in my mind, 'that I ſat for ſome time quite motion- 'leſs; ſeemed as if waked out of a le- 'thargy; and was in ſuch a ſurprize, 'that I did not think of leaving the 'parlour: but, in the midſt of my re- 'verie, I perceived it grew dark; when 'I went again to the chambermaid 'who had brought me thither. I was 'then quite cured of my deſire of be- 'ing a nun; I was frighted to think 'I had been ſo near entering into that 'ſtate, and had almoſt given my word 'for it: but, happily, I had not yet 'gone ſo far.

'Mrs. De St. Hermieres, to whom 'I returned, was very deſirous of hav- 'ing me ſtay all night; but I not only 'wanted to be alone to indulge my 'new reflections, but was afraid that 'ſhe would gueſs by my looks what 'was the diſpoſition of my mind: ſo I 'wanted time to enable me to aſſume 'ſuch a countenance as might not be- 'tray me. As I was going home, I met 'the abbé who had cauſed the nun to 'ſhed ſo many tears: I was juſt en- 'tering into Mr. Villot's houſe; and 'had therefore diſmiſſed the chamber- 'maid. The young hypocrite, with a 'moſt devout mien, ſtopped to pay me 'his reſpect. "We ſhall not, Miſs, "be ſo happy as to enjoy your com- "pany to-night at Mrs. De St. Her- "miere's, where I am going to ſup- "per?"—"No, Sir," replied I; "but "I can give you ſome news of Miſs "De ****, whom I have juſt left, and "who has ſpoke much of you."— "I am obliged to her," returned he; "I ſee her ſometimes: pray, how does "ſhe do?"—"Though it is but three "hours ſince you left her," ſaid I, "ſhe is ſo caſt down, that you would "hardly know her again: I left her "bathed in tears on account of a "young man, whoſe viſits fill her "with horror, and from whom ſhe is "reſolved to receive no more, as long "as ſhe lives. She deſired me to re- "turn him this letter," added I, tak- 'ing it out of my pocket, where it 'accidentally opened. It is probable 'the nun might have half broke open 'the ſeal: however, this muſt doubt- 'leſs have perſuaded him that I had 'read it; and, conſequently, that I 'was acquainted with his villainy. He 'took the note with a trembling hand— "Your ſervant, Sir," ſaid I, as I gave

'it

'it him; "fear nothing from me; "for I promiſe you an inviolable ſe- "creſy: but fear every thing from my "friend, who is reſolved to expoſe "you, if you continue to trouble her "with your viſits." She had not de- 'ſired me to frighten him with this 'menace; but I thought I might add 'this of my own accord. In effect, 'it ſucceeded; he was too frightened 'ever to revive the intrigue: ſo that 'I ſaved the nun, or rather her vir- 'tue, from his perſecution; though 'there were ſome moments in which 'ſhe would have given her life to en- 'joy the ſatisfaction of ſeeing him 'again, as ſhe told me afterwards; but 'her prayers and tears removed this 'diſordered ſtate of mind, and reſtored 'her tranquillity. I returned the next 'day, after dinner, to Mrs. De St. 'Hermiere's; who was ſhut up in her 'oratory, while two or three of her 'friends were waiting for her in the 'parlour. As ſoon as ſhe came down— "Are you here, my dear!" cried ſhe, 'in a whining tone; "I have juſt been "thinking of thee: the time is com- "ing when I muſt no longer have the "pleaſure of ſeeing you with us; but "thou wilt be the better for it.—We "are going to be ſeparated from her, "gentlemen," added ſhe; "and it is "in the houſe of God we muſt here- "after look for our predeſtinated."— "Why ſo, Madam?" cried I, with a 'ſmile I put on to hide a riſing bluſh. "Why, my dear," returned ſhe, "I "have received joyful news for thee: "the marchioneſs thy mother has ſent "me a letter, in which ſhe conſents to "thy taking the veil. She ſays ſhe "herſelf would gladly exchange her "preſent condition for that thou art "diſpoſed to embrace; and does not "value the world enough to detain thee "in it contrary to thy deſires. Theſe "are her very words: and I foreſee "thou wilt ſoon make uſe of her per- "miſſion," added ſhe, giving me the 'letter. Here ſhe took notice that I let 'fall ſome tears. "What is the mat- "ter, Miſs?" reſumed ſhe: "one "would imagine this letter gives you "pain. Did I make a wrong judg- "ment of you? Are we all deceived?" "Sure you have not changed your "mind, have you, child?"—"I wiſh, "Madam, you had conſulted me be- "fore you wrote to my mother," re- 'turned I with a ſigh: "you have "increaſed her averſion to me; for I "will never be a nun; Providence "never appointed that ſtate for me." 'At this, Mrs. De St. Hermieres ſtood 'motionleſs; and all the company 'looked upon one another, and lifted 'up their hands to Heaven, with a vi- 'ſible ſurprize. "You will not be a "nun, then?" cried ſhe, in a plain- 'tive tone that expreſſed her aſtoniſh- 'ment. It was a ſevere mortification 'to her to be robbed of the hopes of 'an adventure ſo very edifying to the 'world, and ſo much to the credit of 'her piety; for, after that ſtock de- 'votion I had acquired from her ex- 'ample, I only wanted a nun's habit 'to become her maſter-piece. "Do "not be diſturbed, Madam," ſaid one 'of the company with an air of con- 'fidence; "this is no more than I ex- "pected: it is only the laſt effort of "our common enemy. You will ſee "her, perhaps, to-morrow, fly to that "happy and holy retreat, which is "well worth the trouble of going "through a few temptations to ob- "tain."—"No, Sir!" returned I, 'with the tears ſtill in my eyes; "no! "this is not a temptation, but a reſo- "lution; which is the reſult of deli- "berate thought."—"If ſo, Miſs, I "ſincerely pity you!" ſaid Mrs. De 'St. Hermieres, with a coolneſs that 'was a preſage of the indifference which 'followed.

'From this time I found ſuch an 'entire change in their behaviour, that 'I could hardly know again any of the 'ſociety: I was diſgraced in their 'opinion; and all their tender re- 'gards, and endearing expreſſions, were 'changed into ſuch a diſreſpectful in- 'difference and diſregard, that I could 'hardly believe myſelf in the ſame 'company. My viſits to the caſtle be- 'came now ſo very rare, that I did not 'ſee Mrs. De St. Hermieres above once 'in a month; who conſtantly gave me 'a cold, but civil, reception.

'About five months after this, one 'of this lady's footmen came from her 'to deſire my company to dinner. I 'was ſurprized at the invitation, which 'appeared ſo new to me; but more ſo 'to ſee her reſume that affectionate be- 'haviour which ſhe had not indulged 'for a long time. I found her with a 'gentleman of about fifty, of a pale,

'grave,

'grave, and meagre aſpect. "Come, my "dear, let me embrace you," ſaid ſhe, 'as ſoon as ſhe ſaw me; "I have never "ceaſed to love you, though I have "ceaſed telling you ſo: let us think "no more of my ſilence on that head, "or on the motives which cauſed it. "God does every thing for the beſt: "the happineſs that is offered you, "comforts me for that you have loſt; "and you ſhall know what I mean "after dinner." While ſhe was ſpeaking, I happened to caſt my eyes on 'the gentleman, who modeſtly caſt 'down his with a grave and reſpectful 'countenance, and with the air of one 'who had ſome concern in what ſhe 'was telling me.

'After dinner, he aroſe to take a 'turn in the garden. "Miſs," ſaid 'Mrs. De St. Hermieres, as ſoon as he 'was gone, "you have no fortune; "your mamma will give you none: "but this gentleman, who is the Ba"ron De Sercour, has a very large "one; he is a man of very great piety, "and thinks he cannot make a better "uſe of his riches than by ſharing "them with a young lady of quality "of your virtue, whoſe merit deſerves "a fortune. He offers you his hand; "and, if you conſent, the marriage "will be concluded in a very few days, "which will ſecure you a very con"ſiderable eſtate. You have nothing "to do but to write to your mamma: "I think you have no room to heſi"tate upon the courſe you ought to "take, if you conſider the circum"ſtances you are in, and thoſe you "may poſſibly be hereafter reduced "to. The baron is not of an age that "will render him abſolutely diſtaſte"ful. I confeſs he has an ill ſtate of "health: but," added ſhe, lowering 'her voice, "it is probable he will "not live long; and, if you ſhould "loſe the baron, he will leave you "what will make his memory dear to "you; and I aſſure you, the ſtate of "a young, rich, though afflicted wi"dow, is leſs painful than that of a "lady of quality without a fortune to "ſupport it. Do you accept of the "propoſal?"

'I was ſome moments without an'ſwering her: I was not unacquainted 'with the badneſs of my ſituation; and 'ſaw the advantages that would at'tend ſuch an union. It is true, his 'penitent, melancholy look, rendered 'him diſagreeable to me; and I could 'not, without reluctance, think of ac'cepting him for a huſband. "But "I may accuſtom myſelf to him," 'thought I; "and there are few un"eaſineſſes which plenty is not a re"medy for." Upon this, I took my 'reſolution. "Well, Madam," ſaid 'I at laſt, "if you will write to my "mother, I will conform to whatever "ſhe pleaſes." The baron preſently 'after this came again into the room; 'when I felt a palpitation at my heart, 'trembled at ſeeing him, and could 'not help imagining that he was al'ready my maſter. "Sir," ſaid Mrs. 'De St. Hermieres, as he entered, "I "muſt inform you that there is your "lady; I found no difficulty to per"ſuade her to accept of that title."— "She does me a great deal of ho"nour," returned he, ſaluting me 'with a ſatisfaction that gave ſome 'vivacity to his eyes, which uſually 'appeared very dull. He then began 'a converſation ſuitable to a devotee 'in love.'

Here I could not help interrupting the nun—'How is it poſſible, Madam,' ſaid I, 'you could think of giving 'your perſon to a man to whom you 'could not give your heart? In my 'opinion, we have no right to diſpoſe of ourſelves but where we are 'called by the tender tie of ſouls. To 'conſent to be another's without theſe 'dear engagements, is to conſent to 'be miſerable, by acting contrary to 'that law of nature which has given 'us paſſions and propenſities, that, 'when conducted by reaſon, point out 'the object, and are the only founda'tion of true felicity. We have, 'ſurely, no right to enter into bonds 'which we have not the inclination, 'the ability, to fulfil; and which, 'therefore, not all the powers on earth 'can ever render ſacred! And, really, 'I can only look on theſe matches as 'a legal kind of proſtitution; ſince 'that tender friendſhip, that ſympathy 'of ſouls, is wanting, which is ne'ceſſary to conſtitute that indiſſoluble 'union which is the eſſence of mar'riage.'

'I believe you are in the right,' returned Miſs De Terviere; 'but I did 'not then know what love was; and 'therefore had not the delicacy which

'that

'that paſſion inſpires; and, conſe-
'quently, could have none of theſe
'ſcruples. It was agreed that the
'baron ſhould write to my mother that
'very day; that Mrs. De St. Her-
'mieres ſhould ſend another letter at
'the ſame time; and that I ſhould add
'a line or two at the bottom of hers,
'to ſhew that all was done with my
'conſent. It was concluded, too, that
'it would be proper to keep this affair
'as ſecret as poſſible till the day of
'our marriage; becauſe the baron had
'a nephew, who was his heir, from
'whom it was neceſſary that it ſhould
'be concealed

'Two days after this, as I was
'walking in our garden, I was met by
'the abbé; who, having loſt all hopes
'of preferment, had thrown off his
'gown; but had ſtill the character of
'a man of the moſt profound piety.
"Good-morrow to you, Miſs," ſaid
'he, coming up to me: "I am told
"that you are going to marry the Ba-
"ron De Sercour; and am come to
"pay my reſpects to my aunt before-
"hand!" I bluſhed at this diſcourſe,
'as if I had ſomething to reproach
'myſelf with on his account. "I
"do not know who told you ſo," re-
'turned I; "but you have not been
"miſinformed. I aſſure you, when I
"promiſed the baron, I did not know
"that you were his nephew; and I am
"only ſorry that it will deprive you
"of an eſtate which I never had the
"leaſt thoughts of taking from you."
—"Since I muſt loſe it," returned he,
'with a forced ſmile, "I had rather
"you ſhould have it than any body
"elſe." Mr. Villot, who was in ano-
'ther walk, ſeeing the abbé, came up
'to us to pay him his reſpects, which
'broke off our converſation; when he
'left me with an affected air of tran-
'quillity. He now came to ſee me
'very often; but deſired me not to tell
'any one that he knew of our intended
'marriage: ſo that I concealed it from
'his uncle, as well as Mrs. De St.
'Hermieres. The baron ſoon heard
'of his frequent viſits, and aſked me
'the reaſon of them; but, as I was
'entirely ignorant of his deſigns, I
'told him that I knew of no reaſon
'for his ſeeing me, unleſs it was be-
'cauſe Mr. Villot's was in the way to
'Mrs. De St. Hermieres's, whom he
'viſited oftener than uſual. When
'he went to this lady's, he behaved in
'a manner that quite ſurprized her:
'he told her that the greateſt difficulty
'he lay under in the eccleſiaſtical ſtate,
'was to conquer a violent paſſion which
'ſhe inſpired; and that, as he was now
'diſcharged from his ſacred office, ſhe
'might do him the favour to accept
'both of his heart and perſon. This
'he ſaid with an apparent confuſion,
'and with eyes fixed on the floor: as
'ſhe then thought him too young for
'her, ſhe made no ſcruple of telling his
'diſcourſe to me; but ſhe ſoon after
'changed her reſolution; for though
'ſhe thought him too young for a huſ-
'band, yet he was not too young to be
'agreeable to her.

'The baron received a letter from
'my mother with her conſent, with
'another to me and Mrs. De St. Her-
'mieres; when our marriage was ſtop-
'ped by a long and dangerous illneſs,
'from which it was above two months
'before I was perfectly recovered.
'The abbé all this while appeared ex-
'tremely uneaſy at my condition, and
'came every day to know how I did:
'ſo that the baron, who had heard him
'ſay he would be married as ſoon as
'he could fix his affections, imagined
'he had a deſign upon me; and aſked
'me if it was not true. "No, Sir,"
'returned I: "your nephew has never
"mentioned any thing to me on this
"ſubject; and ſeems to intereſt him-
"ſelf in my health, purely out of ſen-
"timents of eſteem and friendſhip."
'And theſe were, indeed, my thoughts.

'At laſt I recovered; but was very
'much ſurprized to find that Mrs. De
'St. Hermieres did not join with the
'baron, in ſoliciting me to fix the day
'of our marriage. The day before that
'which was pitched upon for uniting
'me to the baron, ſhe deſired me to come
'and paſs it at her houſe, and lie there.
'In the morning ſhe called me aſide—
"My dear," ſaid ſhe, "I cannot help
"pitying you; and am ſorry to ſee you
"look ſo dull: open your heart to me;
"there is a poſſibility of your yet going
"back. I will engage to excuſe you
"to your mamma; and the abbé ſhall
"ſpeak to his uncle; for I would not
"have you make a ſacrifice of your-
"ſelf."—"Alas, Madam! I have
"only conformed myſelf to your ad-
"vice, and it is too late now to re-
"cede: my mother, who does not love

" me, would not be ſo tractable as you " imagine."—" Let us ſay no more " of it then," ſaid ſhe with an air ' more peeviſh than compaſſionate. ' Here the abbé entered; and, addreſſing ' himſelf to Mrs. De St. Hermieres— " I am told, Madam," ſaid he, " you " are to have company here to night: " is Mrs. De Clarville to be one of your " gueſts?"—" She promiſed me that " ſhe would," returned ſhe; " but I " am afraid ſhe will forget: however, " to prevent it, I will ſend her a ſhort " note.—Miſs," added ſhe, " I yeſ- " terday hurt my hand, and can hardly " hold the pen; will you write it for me?" —" Yes, Madam," replied I, " with all " my heart; you need but tell me what " you would have me ſay."—" A " word will do," returned ſhe. " Say—

" MADAM,
" YOU know I expect you to-night; " pray do not diſappoint me."

" Will you ſign it, Madam?" ſaid ' I, as ſoon as I had done. " No, " child," ſhe replied; " there is no " need of that; ſhe will know what it " means." She then took the paper, ' and deſired the abbé to ring the bell; ' then, recollecting herſelf—" No, you " need not, Sir," ſaid ſhe: " as you " do not ſtay ſupper, I think you had " better go before the baron comes, " and then you may do me the favour " to give it her yourſelf; it will not be " a ſtep out of your way."—" Pray " give it me then, Madam," returned ' he; " and I will execute your com- " miſſion directly:" at this he aroſe ' and left us. Scarce was he gone, ' when the baron entered. We ſupped ' very late; and Mrs. De Clarville, ' whom I had never ſeen, did not come; ' nor did that lady mention her any ' more. Supper was but juſt over when ' the clock ſtruck eleven. Mrs. De St. ' Hermieres put me in mind, that, con- ' ſidering I was but upon the recovery, ' it was time for me to go to bed, eſpe- ' cially as I was to ariſe at five o'clock ' in the morning; on which I immedi- ' ately took leave of the company. But ' I obſerved, as Mrs. De St. Hermieres ' embraced me, ſhe ſeemed confuſed, ' and turned pale. One of her maids ' attended me to my room, in order to ' undreſs me; but I ſent her away, be- ' cauſe I was not diſpoſed to go to bed. ' As I did not find myſelf inclined to ' ſleep, I ſat down in an eaſy-chair, in ' a kind of reverie, where I forgot my- ' ſelf for above an hour; after which, ' being more awake than at firſt, I caſt ' my eyes upon ſome books in a glaſs- ' caſe, and aroſe to take one, that I ' might try if reading a little would ' not make me drowſy. I read for ' about half an hour; and juſt as I be- ' gan to grow weary, had thrown the ' book on the table, and was going to ' undreſs myſelf, in order to go to bed, ' I heard a noiſe in a ſmall cloſet which ' opened into my chamber, the door of ' which was but little more than half ' ſhut. The noiſe continued; I began ' to be terrified, and cried out—" Who " is there?"—" Do not be afraid, " Miſs," ſaid a voice, which I thought ' I knew notwithſtanding my ſurprize; ' and immediately appeared the abbé, ' who, with a ſmiling air, came out of ' the cloſet. I remained ſome time ' with my eyes fixed and ſtaring upon ' him, without being able to ſpeak. " Lord! what do you do here, Sir?" ' cried I at laſt, hardly able to recover ' myſelf; " who brought you here?" —" Fear nothing," ſaid he, impudent- ' ly ſitting down by me; " I aſſure you " I am here purely for the ſake of be- " ing here."—" Ah! what do you do " here?" purſued I, raiſing my voice; " get you gone immediately," added ' I, riſing to open the door; but I found ' it faſt, for the maid had locked it, ' and taken away the key. I then be- ' gan to be full of rage and deſpair, ' and ran to the window to open it, and ' call out. " No, no! I ſhall retire in " a moment down the back-ſtairs," ' cried he, holding me by my arm: " believe me, every body is in bed " and aſleep; and if you awake them, " they will believe I have made uſe of " this ſilent hour of night, and have " not let ſlip ſuch an opportunity; e- " ſpecially as I am here by your con- " ſent."—" By my conſent, villain! " Here by my conſent."—" Yes," ' ſaid he; " and here is a proof of it: " read your own note," added he, ' ſhewing me that which Mrs. De St. ' Hermieres had deſired me to write for ' her, with the word " Madam," torn ' off. " Oh, thou wretch! thou abo- " minable villain! Oh, what a horrid " monſter!" cried I, falling into my ' eaſy-chair; " O my God!" My ſur-

' prize

'prize and tears here ſtopped my voice, 'and I was in an agony that nearly re-'ſembled madneſs. He ſaw my con-'dition without being moved, and with 'all the calmneſs of the moſt hardened 'villain. I was ſometimes tempted to 'caſt myſelf upon him, and endeavour 'to tear him in pieces; but my weak-'neſs reſtrained me: and then, ſudden-'ly ſeized by another emotion, I caſt 'myſelf at his feet—"Oh, Sir," cried 'I, "why will you ruin me? What "have I done to you? Remember your "own character; remember the ſervice "I have done you! I have not divulg-"ed your ſecret; and will never do it "as long as I live." He then raiſed 'me up with the ſame coolneſs. "Though you ſhould not hold your "tongue, nobody will believe you," 'returned he; "it would only be look-"ed upon as the effect of your jea-"louſy; it is not now in your power "to hurt me. Come, be calm; every "thing will be over by-and-by: I am "only doing you a piece of ſervice, by "delivering you from a marriage which "you yourſelf are not pleaſed with, "and which was going to ruin me; "that is all." While he was ſpeak-'ing, I heard the noiſe of ſeveral per-'ſons; my door ſuddenly burſt open, 'and the firſt object which ſtruck my 'eyes was the Baron De Sercour, with 'his drawn ſword in his hand, accom-'panied by Mrs. De St. Hermieres, a 'gentleman who ſupped with us, and 'two or three of the domeſticks, all 'armed.

'The baron and his friend had lain 'at the caſtle, where Mrs. De St. Her-'mieres had detained them under a 'pretence that they might be near the 'church, where they were to go very 'early in the morning. This lady had 'cauſed them both to be awoke, and 'ſent word that the ſervants had di-'ſturbed her, and told her that they 'heard the noiſe of different voices in 'my chamber; that, indeed, I did not 'cry out, but that ſhe preſumed I either 'durſt not, or that I was hindered from 'doing it, and that to all appearance 'there were thieves in my room, and 'therefore entreated them, for my ſake 'as well as her's, to fly to my aſſiſt-'ance, with her ſervants. This was 'the reaſon why they all came in arms.

'The abbé, who knew what would 'happen, had juſt ſet me in the chair; 'and when they appeared, had ſeated 'himſelf by me, with one of my hands 'in his: I turned my head towards 'them with an air of conſternation, 'and my face bathed in tears. As ſoon 'as I ſaw them, I gave a loud ſhriek, 'which they might reaſonably attri-'bute to the confuſion I was in at be-'ing ſurprized with the abbé: my tears 'were an additional preſumption againſt 'me; for from whence could they pro-'ceed, ſince I had not called out for 'help, but from the affliction of a fond 'woman, ready to be ſeparated from 'him ſhe loves. The abbé, I remem-'ber, roſe with a countenance which 'had an air of guilt and ſhame. "How! "you, Miſs!" cried the baron, lifting 'up his hands and eyes with a geſture 'expreſſive of the greateſt conſterna-'tion; "You! whom I have thought "ſo virtuous! Ah, who can we truſt "to?" It was impoſſible for me to make 'any reply, ſince I was almoſt ſuffo-'cated with my ſighs. "Pardon me, "Sir, the confuſion I give you," ſaid 'the abbé, in a ſuppliant tone: "it is "but two or three days ſince I was in-"formed of the intereſt you had in this "lady, and the neceſſity ſhe is under "of marrying you. In the trouble "into which this marriage caſt her, "ſhe deſired to ſee me once more; I "yielded to her tender entreaties; to "her grief; to this note!" added he, 'ſhewing him the contents of it. "In "ſhort, ſhe wept; ſhe weeps ſtill: ſhe "is lovely! and I am but a man!" —"How! that note!" cried I, and 'then ſtopped; I was unable to ſay any 'more, but immediately fainted. The 'abbé now ſlipped away; and the Ba-'ron De Sercour, I was afterwards 'told, was ſo diſordered, that he was 'obliged to be carried out of the room; 'and no ſooner recovered a little, but 'inſiſted upon going home. For my 'part, I came to myſelf through the 'aſſiſtance of the abbé's accomplice, 'the perfidious Mrs. De St. Hermieres, 'who retired as ſoon as I opened my 'eyes. In vain I deſired to ſpeak with 'her; ſhe would not return, but left 'me with her women. I was inſtant-'ly ſeized with a violent fever; and at 'ſix o'clock was ſent back to Mr. Vil-'lot's, with a mind much more diſor-'dered than my body.

'You will eaſily judge, Miſs, that 'this adventure muſt be ſoon blazed

'abroad, which, indeed, it was in the 'moſt cruel manner; and, to ſay all in 'one word, it entirely ruined my re- 'putation. The baron and Mrs. De 'St. Hermieres wrote to my mother 'about it, and ſent back her conſent. 'And a few days after, that lady plead- 'ed ſo effectually for the abbé, that 'ſhe made a perfect reconciliation be- 'tween him and his uncle. The baron, 'who really loved me, aſperſed me 'with ſuch an air of chriſtianity, and 'lamented my ſeeming baſeneſs in 'terms ſo intereſting, ſo ſevere, and yet 'ſo pious, that nobody could hear him 'without being affected. I remained 'near three months, ſtruggling with 'death, diſgraced and ruined in the 'opinion of the world, and without 'any other reſource than the charity of 'my conſtant friends, the honeſt Mr. 'Villot and his wife, who aſſiſted me 'with all imaginable care, notwith- 'ſtanding the indignation of my mo- 'ther, who ſent them word that ſhe 'would entirely abandon and diſown 'me. Theſe good people were all that 'ever oppoſed the torrent of reproach 'into which I was fallen; not that 'they thought me entirely innocent, 'though they could not be perſuaded 'to believe I was ſo culpable as the 'world was ill-natured enough to ima- 'gine. At laſt my fever began to 'abate; and I no ſooner found myſelf 'in a condition to diſcourſe, than my 'firſt care was to relate to them all I 'knew of this unhappy event, and the 'reaſons I had to ſuſpect that Mrs. De 'St. Hermieres was an accomplice in 'the abbé's crime: they regarded him 'as a ſaint, and therefore I thought it 'my duty to unmaſk him, by truſting 'them, under an oath of ſecreſy, with 'his adventure with the nun. This 'ſufficiently undeceived them, and re- 'moved the leaſt ſuſpicion of my guilt; 'and from that inſtant never ceaſed to 'vindicate my innocence, and maintain 'with the utmoſt courage, that the 'publick did not do me juſtice: but 'they were only laughed at; and all 'they could ſay ſignified nothing. As 'ſoon as I could venture abroad, I 'endeavoured to vindicate myſelf: but 'every body ſhunned me; and all my 'companions were forbid to come near 'me. I then confined myſelf to my 'room; and, continually bathed in tears, 'implored the aſſiſtance of Heaven to 'clear up my innocence; and my pray- 'ers at laſt were heard. One of Mrs 'De St. Hermieres's women, who was 'married, and ready to lie-in, being in 'danger of her life, thought herſelf 'obliged to reveal the ſecret; and there- 'fore ſaid, in the preſence of ſeveral 'witneſſes, that the abbé had made her 'a preſent of a fine ring, to engage her 'to convey him into a cloſet in my 'chamber while they were at ſupper, 'and, between twelve and one, to tell 'Mrs. De St. Hermieres that ſhe heard 'a noiſe in my room. "I at firſt," 'ſaid ſhe, "refuſed to do it, except "Miſs De Terviere ſhould approve of "it: he then begged me to keep it ſe- "cret; and told me that his deſign was "only to break off her marriage with "his uncle, by which he ſhould loſe "his eſtate; and farther preſented me "with a note for three thouſand livres, "which I was to receive as ſoon as the "baron was dead. The note and the "ring," ſaid ſhe, "corrupted me; I "introduced him into the cloſet; and "the marriage was not only broken "off, but the young lady's reputation "loſt: this is all the reparation I can "make her; and I beg you will vindi- "cate her to the world, and beg her "pardon for me."

'This, my dear Marianne, might 'have been a ſufficient teſtimony of 'my innocence; for the perſons who 'heard her make this declaration did 'me the juſtice to repeat it wherever 'they went. But this was not all; 'Mrs. De St. Hermieres going to pay 'a viſit to one of her friends, her coach 'was overturned into a deep ditch, 'from which ſhe was taken much 'bruiſed, and ſpeechleſs. This acci- 'dent threw her into ſuch a violent fe- 'ver, that her life was deſpaired of. In 'this extremity ſhe ſent for Mr. Vil- 'lot; and, in the preſence of a number 'of witneſſes, delivered to him a paper 'ſealed up and written by her own 'hand, charging him to open it as ſoon 'as he got home, and publiſh it to the 'world. He made haſte to diſcharge 'his commiſſion; and we broke it open 'with as much curioſity as ſurprize: 'and this, in a few words, was the 'ſubſtance of it.

"BEING ready to appear before "Him to whom I muſt give an "account of all my actions, I hereby "declare

" declare to the Baron of Sercour, " that he ought not to impute to Miſs " De Terviere any part of the adven- " ture which broke off his marriage " with her. It was I and another per- " ſon who contrived the ſtory of her " having an inclination for his nephew; " and what happened in her room was " a plot concerted between that other " perſon and myſelf, in order to make " a breach between her and the baron. " I die with a heart full of the moſt " perfect eſteem for the virtue of Miſs " De Terviere, to whom I conſented " to do an injury from an apprehen- " ſion of the wrong which the ſaid " other perſon threatened to do me if " I refuſed to be his accomplice.

" A. De St. Hermieres."

' It is impoſſible to expreſs the joy, ' the ſatisfaction, and delight, this writ- ' ing gave me; you muſt judge of it by ' that exceſs of miſery under which I ' had ſo long languiſhed. Mr. Villot ' went immediately to ſhew this paper ' everywhere; and began with the Ba- ' ron De Sercour, who inſtantly came ' to pay me a viſit, and make his apo- ' logy. Every body began now to load ' me with the teſtimonies of their eſteem ' and friendſhip: all who knew my ' mother, wrote to her on this happy ' ſubject; while the abbé was not only ' contemned by his uncle, but became ' an object of publick abhorrence; and ' was obliged to leave that part of the ' country, and hide himſelf in a town ' at ſome diſtance; where we heard, a- ' bout two years after, that his ill con- ' duct and debts had brought him to a ' gaol, where he ended his days. Mrs. ' De St. Hermieres's chambermaid re- ' covered; and that lady herſelf ſurviv- ' ed her writing that note, which had ' cleared me ſo compleatly, and retired ' to a remote country ſeat of her's, ' where ſhe lived when I left the coun- ' try. The Baron De Sercour, whom ' I uſed with the utmoſt politeneſs, en- ' deavoured to renew his friendſhip ' with me, and even propoſed to con- ' clude our marriage; but he had uſed ' me too ungenerouſly for me ever to ' take ſuch a reſolution.

' I was now about eighteen years ' old, when Mrs. Durſan, an elderly ' widow lady, who was ſiſter to Mr. ' De Terviere my grandfather, return- ' ed to this part of the country, which ' ſhe had left for above fifty years, that ' ſhe might ſee again her family, and ' end her days amongſt her relations. ' She had a ſon, to whom ſhe had given ' a very liberal education, but having ' ſent him to St. Maloe's to tranſact ' ſome buſineſs for her, he fell in love ' with a young woman of great beauty, ' but of a poor, and even infamous, fa- ' mily; though her character was not ' ſtained with their vices. Mrs. Durſan ' no ſooner heard of his deſign to marry ' this girl, than ſhe flew into a rage, ' and let him know that he would have ' nothing to expect from her, but re- ' ſentment, if he perſiſted in his deſign, ' which ſhe thought to the laſt degree ' baſe and deteſtable. Her ſon, finding ' that ſhe was not to be prevailed upon, ' no longer thought of what he ſhould ' loſe by indulging his paſſion, but ' coolly reſolved upon his own ruin. ' He found means to rob the old lady ' of twenty thouſand livres; went to ' his miſtreſs, impoſed upon her by a ' forged conſent of his mother's, whoſe ' hand he counterfeited; and had juſt ' time to marry her before the old ' lady, who too late found out the rob- ' bery, could think of preventing it, and ' obliged her to run away with him to ' avoid being purſued, after having con- ' feſſed that he had deceived her. Three ' or four years after this, he wrote two ' or three letters to Mrs. Durſan; who, ' in anſwer to the ſorrow he expreſſed ' for his crime, let him know, that he ' had behaved too ill ever to expect for- ' giveneſs, and that ſhe would never ' ſee him more; ſo that ſhe had not now ' heard from him for above ſeventeen ' years. Mr. De Terviere, my uncle, ' being acquainted with this affair, ' went to wait upon the old lady, to ' endeavour to cultivate a friendſhip ' with her, that he might be ſubſtitut- ' ed in the room of her ſon, as he had ' been in that of my father: but he had ' to deal with a woman who had pene- ' tration enough to ſee through his de- ' ſigns; and was ſhocked at his ridicu- ' lous behaviour. However, ſhe bought ' his caſtle, with the eſtate that belong- ' ed to it; which he was glad to diſpoſe ' of, as he uſually reſided at his wife's ' eſtate in Burgundy. Mr. Villot car- ' ried me thither to ſee this lady: ſhe ' was pleaſed with my company, and ' ſoon began to love me; and was de- ' lighted to find that I had a ſincere af- ' fection for her. He, intending to

' leave

'leave me with her only for a few days, 'came to fetch me away; but Mrs. 'Durſan was not diſpoſed to part with 'me. "My dear," ſaid ſhe, taking 'me aſide, "art thou weary of this "houſe?"—"No, aunt," ſaid I; "but "I am weary of being anywhere elſe." —"Well then, thou ſhalt ſtay with "me," returned ſhe; "I think thou "wilt be more reſpected here than "at Mr. Villot's."—"I think ſo too, "Madam," replied I, ſmiling. "Well "then, I will write to thy mother to- "morrow," added ſhe, "to let her "know that I will take thee under my "care: between thee and I, Mr. Vil- "lot's is not a houſe ſuitable to thy "birth. Miſs De Terviere a boarder "at a farmer's! A very pretty thing in- "deed!"—"It is much better than "being boarder at a vine-dreſſer's, as "I once thought I ſhould have been," 'replied I. "It is ſo," ſaid ſhe: "I "heard thy hiſtory yeſterday, and am "ſenſible how much thou art obliged "to honeſt Villot and his wife. But, "not to mention thy mother, what a "pretty couple of aunts thou haſt got! "what relations!"

'While we were talking thus, Mr. 'Villot entered the room. "Come, "Sir," ſaid Mrs. Durſan, "we were "juſt talking of you: you are come "for Miſs De Terviere; but ſuppoſe "I ſhould not be willing to part with "her, you will reſign her to me, will "not you? How much is due for her "board?"—"You need not be in "haſte about that," replied he: "as "to our young miſtreſs, it is fit you "ſhould have her, ſince you deſire it; "but yet I ſhall return home very dull "at the thoughts of having loſt her; "we ſhall think the houſe looks very "ſtrange without her; for we love her "as well as our own child, and ſhall "never love her leſs," added he, with 'the tears almoſt in his eyes. "Nor "does your child," ſaid I, "return "your affection with a leſs degree of "tenderneſs."—"But, Sir," cried 'Mrs. Durſan, with a look that ſhew- 'ed ſhe was charmed at his reluctance 'to part with me, "you need not diſ- "turb yourſelf; you are not going to "loſe my couſin entirely, for you may "come and ſee her as often as you "pleaſe."—"My wife and I will "gladly make uſe of this permiſſion," 'ſaid he with a low bow. I then em- 'braced him without ceremony, deſir- 'ed him to give my ſincere love to Mrs. 'Villot; and promiſed to go to ſee her 'the next day. After which he left me.

'I now lived in that caſtle which 'would have been my father's, had 'Mr. De Terviere my grandfather liv- 'ed long enough to have altered his 'will. Every thing here, for upwards 'of five years, conſpired to make me 'pleaſed with my ſituation: the beauty 'with which they now flattered me, 'gained me abundance of admirers; 'and I ſoon became the reigning toaſt 'of that part of the country, while 'my behaviour made me univerſally 'beloved, and gained me a great many 'friends. Mrs. Durſan, whom I 'loved with the moſt ſincere affection, 'liſtened to the praiſes which ſhe fre- 'quently heard beſtowed upon me, 'with an eagerneſs which expreſſed 'the greatneſs of her affection: ſhe 'ſummed up theſe commendations; 'and from thence inferred that ſhe 'had reaſon to love and admire me, 'and give me the tendereſt place in her 'heart. But this good lady, who had 'hitherto appeared in perfect health, 'began now to experience the decays 'of nature; her vivacity and activity 'began to forſake her; and all the in- 'firmities of old age came on apace, 'and filled me with apprehenſions that 'I ſhould ſoon loſe her. I could not 'think of her dying, without the great- 'eſt uneaſineſs: yet I reſolved not 'to frighten her, by diſcovering my 'concern; and therefore endeavoured 'to counterfeit my uſual gaiety and 'chearfulneſs. But we laugh with a 'very ill grace in caſes like this; and 'wretchedly mimick the reverſe of 'what we feel! I could not deceive 'Mrs. Durſan; ſhe ſaw the ſituation 'of my heart, and ſmiled moſt ten- 'derly when ſhe looked at me, to 'thank me for the ſtruggles ſhe ſaw I 'was in with myſelf.

'One day, as I entered her room, I 'aſked her, with an affected vivacity, 'how ſhe did. "I am better, child, "to-day," ſaid ſhe: "but we are not "immortal; I have been a great while "in the world," added ſhe, ſealing a 'packet. "Pray, who do you write "to, Madam?" cried I. "To no- "body, my dear," returned ſhe; "I "have only been taking ſome proper "meaſures for thee. I have no child;

"it

" it is now above twenty years ſince I " heard from my ſon; ſo that I fancy " he is dead; but, though he ſhould " be alive, it would be the ſame thing " to me; not that I have any reſent- " ment againſt him now; may God " bleſs him, and make him an honeſt " man! but neither the honour of my " family, religion, nor good manners, " which he has equally violated, will " permit me to leave him my eſtate." ' Here I interrupted her, to endeavour ' to ſoften her in favour of her unhappy ' ſon; but ſhe would not even hear ' what I had to ſay for him. " Hold " thy tongue," ſaid ſhe; " it is not a " fit of ill-humour that renders me ſo " inflexible: the queſtion is not, whe- " ther I ſhould be kind to him; but " whether being ſo would not be a " weak and criminal indulgence, that " would break in upon all order, and " be a breach of juſtice, both human " and divine. This ſilly wretch has " had no regard to any thing; and " yet thou wouldſt have me ſet ſuch " an example of impunity as might " prove fatal to thy ſon, if thou " ſhouldſt ever have one. Had he " married as thy father did, (I will " not ſay a girl of a noble extraction, " but one of a good, or barely an ho- " neſt family, though ever ſo poor) I " ſhould have been reconciled long " ago: but for my ſon not only to " marry one of the meaneſt birth, " but of a family known to be infa- " mous; one from among the very " dregs of the people; I cannot think " of it without horror. But to re- " turn to what I was ſaying. I have " no other heir but thy uncle Ter- " viere, who is already very rich, and " poſſeſſed of thy own eſtate too. I " have been told he had the cruelty to " take the advantage of thy father's " misfortunes, without ever endea- " vouring, by his aſſiſtance, to alle- " viate them. He would rejoice at " my ſon's baſeneſs and my grief for " him. Though he has thy father's " eſtate, he nevertheleſs ſhews no con- " cern for thee; therefore I will not " hear of him. Thou haſt nothing " to expect from thy barbarous mo- " ther; and deſerveſt a better ſituation " than thou wouldſt be left in: and I " ſhall only make the fortune of a " niece, for whom I have a tender af- " fection; who I know loves me in " return; fears to loſe me; and will, I " am ſure, regret my loſs, though ſhe " is heir to my fortune. My ſon will " not find thee without pity for him in " the misfortunes in which he is, per- " haps, now involved: thy gratitude " is the reſource I leave him." I ' could make no other anſwer to this ' diſcourſe but by burſting into a ' flood of tears. Methought ſhe was ' going to expire; and this will ſeemed ' a ſort of giving me an eternal adieu: ' never did ſhe appear ſo dear to me as ' ſhe did now. I ſat down, and gave ' a looſe to my ſorrow: ſhe eaſily ' gueſſed at the ſubject of my grief; ' came to me; and, taking me by the ' hand—" Thou loveſt me better than " my eſtate, my dear; do not you? " Dry up thy tears; this is only a pre- " caution which my years oblige me " to take." — " I hope, Madam," ' ſaid I, endeavouring to recover my- ' ſelf, " your ſon is not dead; and I " wiſh you may live to ſee him again."

' While we were in this diſcourſe, ' we heard the voices of two ladies in ' the hall, who were come to pay us a ' viſit; on which I ran into my room, ' to prevent their ſeeing my diſorder: ' however, I was obliged to return in ' a little time to keep them company; ' when they told us, they had agreed to ' divert themſelves the next day with ' fiſhing; and aſked us to partake with ' them in their recreation: but as I ' could not have Mrs. Durſan's com- ' pany, I found means to excuſe my- ' ſelf; and, though I endeavoured to ' conceal the motive which made me un- ' willing to ſhare in their amuſements, ' by feigning an indiſpoſition, my ' aunt eaſily ſaw that the only reaſon ' was that I could not bear to leave ' her. Whatever diſguiſes I put on ' to prevent her taking notice of my ' concern for her, ſhe ſaw through my ' deſigns; and the daily diſcoveries ſhe ' made of my exceſſive tenderneſs and ' regard for her, at laſt made her love ' me with all that affection which is ' due from an indulgent mother to a ' fond and obedient daughter.

' One day, when the old lady was ' aſleep, as I was walking, with a book ' in my hand, in which I was reading, ' in a grove adjoining to the caſtle, I ' heard a noiſe at the end of an avenue ' leading to the houſe, and immedi- ' ately went to ſee what was the mat-

' ter:

'ter: when I obſerved one of Mrs. 'Durſan's game-keepers, with one of 'his ſervants, quarrelling with a 'young gentleman, and endeavouring 'to make him deliver a gun he had on 'his ſhoulder. I felt myſelf a little 'moved at the brutality and threaten-'ing tone in which they ſpoke to him, 'as well as at the violence they were 'about to uſe; and therefore made as 'much haſte as I could to come up 'with them, calling to them at the 'ſame time to forbear. The nearer I 'approached them, the more their be-'haviour diſpleaſed me, becauſe I 'could better perceive the young man; 'whom, indeed, it was difficult to 'look upon with indifference: his air, 'his ſhape, and countenance, ſtruck 'me, though he appeared in a plain 'and thread-bare ſuit. "What are "you about there?" cried I, in an 'angry tone, when I got pretty near 'them. "We have ſtopped this boy, "here, who has killed ſome game up-"on my lady's lands; and are going "to take his gun from him," ſaid 'the keeper, with all the confidence 'of a man who is proud of his au-'thority, and glad of an opportunity to 'exert it. The young man pulled off 'his hat in a very reſpectful manner, 'as ſoon as I came near; and, from 'time to time, caſt upon me a modeſt 'and ſubmiſſive look, while the other 'was ſpeaking. "Let him alone; "let the gentleman go," ſaid I to the 'game-keeper, who had hitherto called 'him only boy, whoſe incivility I 'was willing to atone for. "Go "about your buſineſs," added I; "he "is without doubt a ſtranger, and "knew not upon what ground he "might or might not divert himſelf." —"I did but croſs theſe fields, Ma-"dam," ſaid he with a low bow, "in my way to another place; and "they are miſtaken if they think I "have ſhot any thing on their miſ-"treſs's ground: but they are more "in the wrong, to pretend to diſarm "a man they do not know; and who, "notwithſtanding the ill appearance I "make, am not born to be treated "thus by men of their ſtation." On 'this, the game-keeper and his com-'rade inſiſted that he deſerved no fa-'vour; and continued giving him very 'opprobrious language; but I im-'poſed ſilence upon them with indig-'nation. At my firſt coming, I had 'only found them brutiſh; but now 'they began to uſe him with intole-'rable inſolence. "Hold your tongue," 'cried I to them; "you talk nonſenſe: "retire a little; but do not go away." 'And then, addreſſing myſelf to the 'young gentleman, I aſked if they 'had taken any game from him. "No, Miſs," ſaid he: "I cannot ſuf-"ficiently thank you for the protec-"tion you have been pleaſed to grant "me on this occaſion. I have been "ſeeking ſome game, it is true; but "from a motive which will appear to "you very pardonable: it is for a gen-"tleman who has ſeveral relations "amongſt the nobility of this coun-"try; he has been many years abſent "from it, and returned to it the day "before yeſterday, with my mother. "In ſhort, Miſs, it is for my father: "I left him ſick, or, at leaſt, very "much indiſpoſed, at the houſe of a "peaſant, where we have retired; and "you will judge that he can be but ill "accommodated there, as he is not in "a condition that will ſuffer him to "be at much expence in purchaſing "what is fit for him. I came out "this morning to ſell a little jewel I "have in my pocket, and took my "fowling-piece in my hand, that I "might, as I returned back, catch "ſomething which my father might "eat with leſs diſguſt than what they "have given him hitherto."

'You are ſenſible, Marianne, what 'a mortifying diſcourſe this muſt be 'to the young gentleman; yet there 'was not a ſingle word in it which did 'not excite my regard as much as my 'ſenſibility, and which did not force 'me to diſtinguiſh the man from his 'misfortunes: nothing could be more 'oppoſite than his perſon and indi-'gence. "I am ſorry, Sir," ſaid I, "that I did not come ſoon enough to "prevent what has paſſed. You may "ſhoot here as often as you pleaſe, "and I will take care that nobody "ſhall hinder you: here is plenty of "game; and you will not go far be-"fore you find what you want for "your father. But may I ſee the "jewel which you intend to ſell?"— "Alas, Madam!" returned he, "it "is but a trifle; it is worth but about "two hundred livres: but that may be "ſufficient to ſupport my father, till

"his

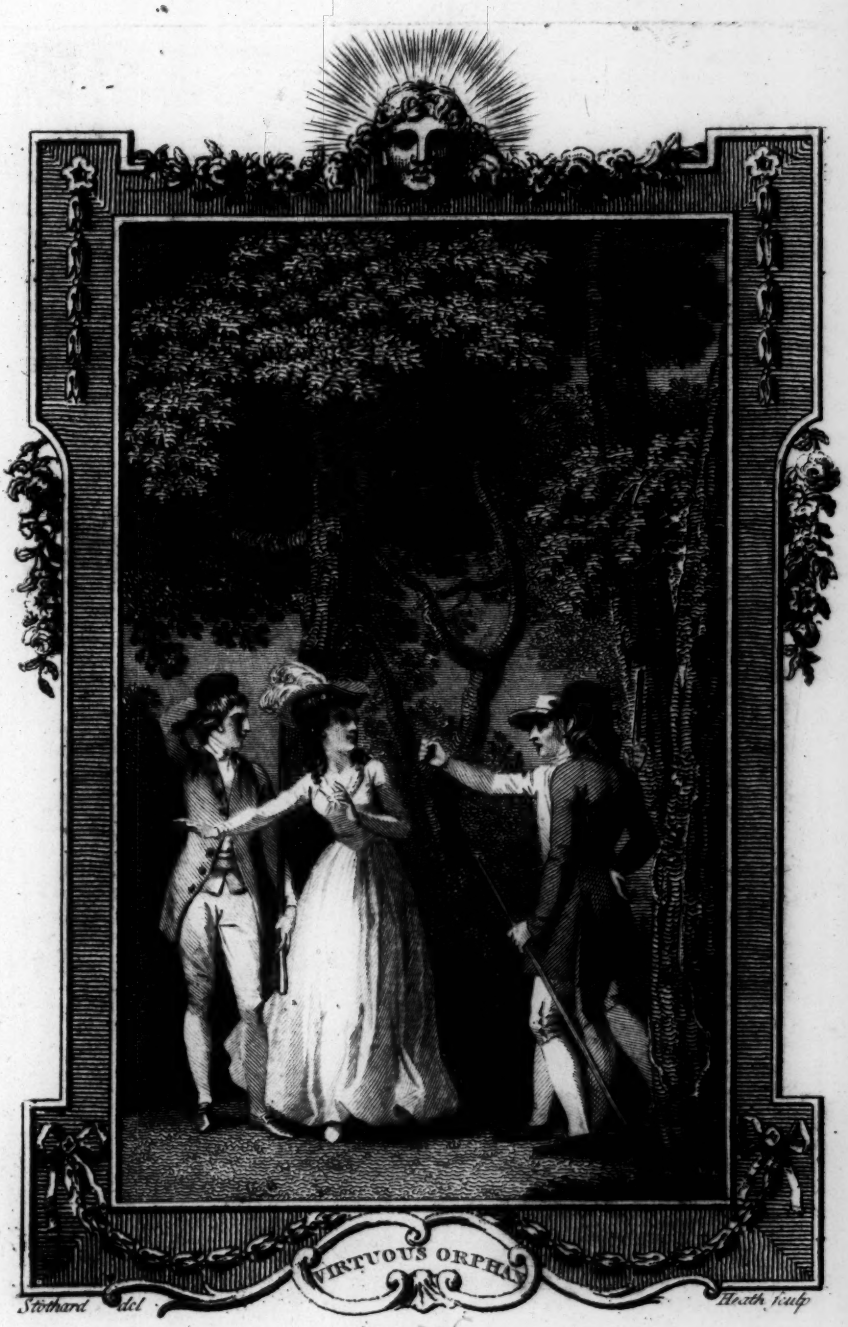

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Plate VII. Published as the Act directs, by Harrison & Co. Nov.r 13. 1784.

" his affairs take a better turn. Here " it is," added he, giving it me. " If you pleaſe to come again to-" morrow morning," ſaid I, after ' having taken the ring and looked at ' it, " perhaps I may have found one " willing to buy it. I will ſhew it to " the lady of this caſtle, who is my " aunt; ſhe is generous, and I will " tell her the reaſon that induces you to " ſell it: it will infallibly move her; " and I hope ſhe will ſpare you the " trouble of carrying it to the town, " where I foreſee you will find but " few people who will care to buy it." ' This I ſaid as I was giving him back ' the ring, but he deſired me to keep ' it. " There is no need of that, " Miſs," ſaid he, " ſince you will be " ſo good as to try what you can do " for us. I will return to-morrow: " beſides, it is fit the lady you ſpeak " of ſhould have time to examine it; " therefore permit me to leave it with " you." I was ſurprized at the ſud-' den frankneſs of this propoſition, ' which pleaſed me, and made me bluſh ' without knowing why: however, I ' refuſed at firſt to keep the ring, and ' preſſed him to take it back. " No, " Miſs," ſaid he, bowing, " it is " much better that you ſhould have it, " that you may be able to ſhew it." ' And on this he left me. I ſtood ſtill ' to look after him till he got out of ' ſight: I beheld him with pity; I ' wiſhed him well; ſaw him with plea-' ſure; and thought that in this I was ' only generous.

' The game-keeper and his comrade ' waited in a walk thirty or forty ſteps ' from us, as I had ordered them; and ' I then went back to them. " If " you ſhould meet again this young " gentleman," ſaid I, " I forbid your " troubling him any more; and I ſhall " take care that Mrs. Durſan herſelf " ſhall forbid it too." And then ' went into the caſtle, with my mind ' full of this lovely youth, and charm-' ed with his modeſt, his reſpectful, ' and polite behaviour: even the ring ' took up ſome part of my attention; ' but I did not conſider it as an indif-' ferent thing. As Mrs. Durſan was ' now awake, I told her my little ad-' venture; and ſhe did not fail to ap-' prove of all I had done: and this ' gave me ſuch hopes, that I immedi-' ately ſhewed her the ring, and told ' her what I had promiſed, not doubt-' ing but I ſhould meet with ſucceſs, ' and have the money for it directly. ' But I was quite miſtaken; my aunt ' and I were not affected in the ſame ' manner; ſhe was only good and cha-' ritable; a diſpoſition that does not ' uſually prompt people to buy a thing of ' which they have no manner of need. " Why, ſure thou waſt dreaming!" ' ſaid ſhe. " What ſhould I do with " the ring? I could buy it for nobody " but thee: and I have given thee " much finer ones. No, child; take " it back again," returned ſhe, giving ' it me with a melancholy and thought-' ful air; " take it out of my ſight: " it makes me call to mind a ſmall " diamond I had formerly, which I " gave to my ſon as ſoon as he had " finiſhed his ſtudies; it is ſo like it, " that one would think it the ſame." ' At this I took it again, wrapped it ' up in the paper I had taken it out of, ' and aſſured her ſhe ſhould never ſee it ' any more. " Stay," returned ſhe; " I think it would be proper thou " ſhouldſt offer to lend the young man " a little money, which he may pay " thee again when he has ſold his jew-" el. There is ten crowns for him: " I do not much care whether he re-" turns it or no; I will give it him; " but do not tell him ſo."—" Indeed " I will not, Madam," replied I, ' taking this ſmall ſum, which fell far ' ſhort of what my generoſity would ' have excited me to have done for him; ' which, however, joined to what I ' would add to it, would become a lit-' tle more worthy of his acceptance; ' for Mrs. Durſan, who would have ' me play upon occaſion, never ſuffered ' me to want money in my pocket. All ' my concern was to know how to of-' fer this ſum to the young gentleman ' without making him bluſh at the in-' digence of his family, or ſuſpect that ' this loan was deſigned as a gift.

' The next day, as I was walking on ' the terrace of the garden with Mrs. ' Durſan, I was told that a ſtranger ' wanted to ſpeak with me: I gueſſed ' who it was; and went to him with a ' ſecret emotion, and received him with ' an air we generally aſſume when we ' come to tell perſons we have not ſuc-' ceeded in our attempts for them. I ' told him I was very ſorry that I could ' not perſuade my aunt to buy his ring;

ſhe having ſo many already, that ſhe could not tell what to do with it: but, however, ſhe would be glad to ſerve him and his family; and, as a proof of it, would lend him a ſmall ſum till their affairs would make it convenient for them to return it. He ſeemed agreeably ſurprized; and, with a grateful ſmile, told me he was at a loſs to know what he ought moſt to thank us for; the ſervice we were willing to do his family, or the care I took to diſguiſe the nature of the obligation. "My father and mother will feel as much gratitude for your kindneſs as myſelf," ſaid he: "but I am come to tell you, Miſs, that our uneaſineſs is over; and that yeſterday we found a lady who has been ſo kind as to lend us all we wanted." Mrs. Durſan, who then entered the hall, prevented me from making him any reply. "Is not this the gentleman who truſted you with the ring you ſhewed me, niece?" ſaid ſhe. "Yes, Madam," replied I; "but the gentleman will not ſell it now."—"I am glad to hear it," ſaid ſhe: "but, though I have not bought it, can I be of no ſervice to you, Sir?" added ſhe, addreſſing herſelf to him. "Your parents, my niece informs me, are juſt arrived in this country; and I ſhould be glad of an opportunity to ſerve them." I could hardly forbear embracing my aunt, I was ſo pleaſed with this declaration. "I ſhall let my father and mother know the obliging manner in which you intereſt yourſelf in our affairs," returned he; "and, meanwhile, I entreat you, Madam, to continue in this favourable diſpoſition towards us." He had no ſooner pronounced theſe words, than Mrs. Durſan ſeemed aſtoniſhed; and ſtood for ſome time ſilent: when, recovering herſelf —"Is your father ſick ſtill?" ſaid ſhe. "He is better than he was yeſterday, Madam," replied he. "But pray, Sir," cried ſhe again, "what is the nature of thoſe affairs which bring him hither?"—"He is come to accommodate ſome family concerns, Madam," returned he, in a timorous tone, "which he will acquaint you with himſelf, when he has the honour to ſee you; but there are ſome reaſons which will not permit him to ſhew himſelf ſo ſoon."—"Well," ſaid ſhe, taking hold of my arm, to help her to go, "I have friends in this country; and it will not be my fault if I am not of ſervice to you." She then left him; and, contrary to my inclination, obliged me to wait on her; for methought I had ſtill many things to ſay to him; and he, on his part, ſeemed not to have diſcloſed all his mind to me, and, I could eaſily ſee, was ſorry to part from me ſo ſoon. "This young man," ſaid Mrs. Durſan, "has a moſt engaging mien; and I am perſuaded he muſt belong to perſons of faſhion: his voice gave me a ſtrange emotion; I could not help fancying I heard my ſon ſpeak." Somebody here interrupted our converſation; when I went into my room in a deep ſtudy, while this amiable perſon took up all my thoughts: I longed to ſee him again; but waited two days in vain, though not without a great deal of impatience. The ſecond day one of Mrs. Durſan's moſt intimate friends came to pay her a viſit at about four in the afternoon; and as I was, out of complaiſance, waiting upon her back to her coach, which ſhe had ordered to ſtop at the great walk which leads to the caſtle—"Let us take a turn this way for a few minutes," ſaid ſhe, turning towards a little wood which ſurrounded the houſe, and which had been cut through to make this avenue: "there are ſome perſons who wait for us there, who durſt not follow me to your houſe, and whom I fain would ſhew you." I ſmiled at this: "May I truſt myſelf with you, Madam?" ſaid I, in jeſt. "Has ſomebody any intention to run away with me?"—"No," returned ſhe, in the ſame tone: "I will not take you far." And, indeed, we had hardly got into the midſt of the wood, before we ſaw, about ten paces from us, three perſons, who approached us with great reſpect and civility, one of whom I at once knew to be the young man I have mentioned; the other was a genteel woman of about forty years old, who ſeemed to have been a perfect beauty, and had ſtill a moſt engaging appearance, though her pale and melancholy countenance ſhewed ſhe had been long involved in diſtreſs,

and

and been familiar with ſorrow: ſhe ‘ was dreſſed in an old gown, which ‘ had only the marks of having once ‘ been fine. The other was a man between forty and fifty years old, of a ‘ very ſickly look, and was ſo ill dreſſed, ‘ that he had no marks of his dignity ‘ but his ſword. It was he that came ‘ up to us firſt, and with a reſpectful ‘ bow, which I returned, full of curioſity to know what this ſcene would ‘ produce—“ Sir,” ſaid I to the youth ‘ who ſtood by him, “ pray tell me “ who I am now with?”—“ It is my “ father and mother, Miſs, that you “ ſee here,” returned he; “ and, not “ to keep you any longer in ſuſpenſe, “ you are with Mr. and Mrs. Durſan.”—“ It is true, my dear,” ſaid ‘ the lady who brought me; “ this is “ your couſin, the ſon of that aunt “ who has given you all her eſtate, as “ ſhe has told me herſelf: and I muſt “ now beg your pardon; for, ſenſible “ of your great ſoul, I know that, in “ bringing you hither, I have done you “ the worſt office in the world.”

‘ Scarce had ſhe uttered theſe words, ‘ when Mrs. Durſan threw herſelf at ‘ my feet. “ It is I who have been the “ cauſe of my huſband's misfortunes; “ and therefore I ought to proſtrate “ myſelf before you, and to entreat you “ to pity him and his ſon,” cried ſhe, ‘ taking hold of my hand, which ſhe ‘ bathed with her tears. Whilſt ſhe ‘ was ſpeaking, both the father and ‘ ſon, with their eyes full, waited for ‘ my anſwer in the moſt ſupplicating ‘ poſture. “ Dear Madam, what do “ you do there?” cried I, embracing ‘ her, and penetrated even to the bottom of my ſoul at ſeeing this unfortunate family around me, making ‘ me the arbitrator of their fate, and ‘ ſoliciting me, with trembling hands, ‘ to pity their miſery. “ What are “ you doing, Madam?” cried I again. “ Ariſe! you have not a better friend “ than I am. Is it neceſſary thus to “ humble yourſelves before me in order to touch my heart? Can your “ eſtate be mine whilſt you live? I “ have not received that gift without “ pain; and ſhall give it up to you “ with a thouſand times more pleaſure than it could ever have given “ me in the poſſeſſion.” At the ſame ‘ time I offered my hand to the father ‘ and ſon; who took hold of it with ‘ ſuch a tender timidity, as made me ‘ bluſh, notwithſtanding the confuſion ‘ I was in at this moving ſpectacle: in ‘ fine, the mother, whom I had held ‘ hitherto with my arm about her neck, ‘ aroſe at laſt, and left me at liberty; ‘ when I embraced Mr. Durſan, who ‘ could only thank me by a great many ‘ incoherent words, without concluding one ſentence. After having left ‘ the father, I caſt my eyes on the ſon: ‘ he was my relation; and, in theſe ‘ circumſtances, nothing ought to have ‘ hindered me from giving him the ‘ ſame teſtimonies of my friendſhip as ‘ I had given Mr. Durſan; but his relation to me was ſomething different. ‘ I did not find my tenderneſs for him ‘ ſo noble: there had paſſed between ‘ us, I do not know what; ſomething ‘ ſo ſweet, ſo tender, as to hinder me ‘ from treating him with the ſame ‘ freedom, and which even ſeemed to ‘ awe him. “ But why,” thought I, ‘ after a moment's recollection, “ ſhould “ I treat him with more reſerve than “ the others? What will they think “ of it?” I then came to a reſolution; ‘ and embraced him with an emotion ‘ which was equal to his.

“ Let us firſt ſee what you would “ have me do?” ſaid I to Mr. and Mrs. ‘ Durſan. “ My aunt has a very great “ affection for me; and you may depend “ upon the aſcendant this will give me “ over her. I muſt repeat it again, “ that the will ſhe has made in my favour ſhall ſtand for nothing; and “ I will tell her ſo, whenever you “ pleaſe. But we muſt take ſome “ meaſures ere you appear before her,” ‘ added I, addreſſing myſelf to the father. “ Do not you think it proper,” ſaid the lady who brought me ‘ here, “ that I ſhould prepare her to “ receive her ſon, and let her know “ that he is here?”—“ No,” returned ‘ I, in a penſive tone; “ I know ſhe is “ inflexible with regard to Mr. Durſan; and therefore that cannot be “ the way to ſucceed.”—“ Alas, “ Miſs!” cried the old gentleman, “ it would be only granting a pardon “ to a dying man: I ſhall ſoon be no “ more. It is not for myſelf that I “ implore her mercy; it is for my “ wife; it is for my ſon; whom I “ ſhall leave in the moſt wretched indigence!”—“ Why do you talk of “ indigence! Pray baniſh this thought

" from your mind," replied I; " you " do not do me juſtice. I have al- " ready told you, and now repeat it " again, that I will withold from them " nothing that is yours; and, from " this moment, your condition ceaſes " to depend on the ſucceſs of your re- " conciliation with my aunt; unleſs, " upon my refuſing to be her heir, ſhe " ſhould make a new will in favour of " another; which I cannot ſee the " leaſt probability of. But hold! I " have a thought juſt come into my " mind. Your mother wants a cham- " bermaid: ſhe has loſt one whom, " doubtleſs, you have known; it is " poor Le Fevre! Let us make uſe of " this conjuncture, and endeavour to " put Mrs. Durſan in her place.—It " is you, Madam," ſaid I to the other ' lady, " that muſt preſent her to my " aunt, and give her a character; you " muſt anſwer for her affection to her, " and boldly affirm of her all the ad- " vantageous things that can be ſaid " on an occaſion of this nature. This " lady is amiable; the engaging ſweet- " neſs of her countenance will give a " ſanction to all you ſhall ſay of her; " and her conduct will compleatly " juſtify your encomiums. My aunt " will ſoon love her, and thank you " for having given her ſuch a treaſure; " and ſhe will no longer be able to " reſiſt, when, in ſome happy moment, " ſhe will give us an opportunity to " diſcover the cheat. Beſides, no wo- " man ought to bluſh at ſerving an " offended mother-in-law, when it is " only a ſtratagem to diſarm her re- " ſentment."

' I had no ſooner made this propoſal, ' than they all let me know they ap- ' proved of it, by thanking me anew, ' and ſaying they were ſurprized at my ' generoſity, zeal, and good-will, to ' them. " To-morrow morning," ſaid ' the lady, who was both their friend ' and mine, " I will introduce Mrs. " Durſan to her mother-in-law: ſhe " aſked me to-day if I knew of a diſ- " creet, ſenſible perſon, that might ſup- " ply Le Fevre's place. I promiſed I " would look out for one—and I now " hire you for her," added ſhe, ſmil- ' ing, to Mrs. Durſan, who was de- ' lighted with my contrivance. We ' then heard ſome ſervants at a ſmall ' diſtance; when, for fear of a diſco- ' very, we agreed to part; and Mrs. ' Du Frainville (that was the lady's ' name who brought me hither) and I ' retired accordingly, and went to the ' end of the avenue to her coach; in ' which ſhe waited to take my couſins ' to her houſe, while I returned home. ' The next morning, about ten o'clock, ' Mrs. Du Frainville came to ſee us ' again, and entered my aunt's room ' almoſt as ſoon as I; when, after a ' little converſation—" At laſt, Ma- " dam," ſaid that lady, " you have " got another chambermaid; and, I " aſſure you, ſhe is a very extraordinary " one. Was it not for you, I would " turn away mine, and keep her for " myſelf: and I muſt needs love you " very much to give you the prefe- " rence. She is a careful, ingenious, " affectionate, and virtuous woman; " and, in ſhort, I hardly think it poſ- " ſible for you to find her equal."— " Indeed!" cried my aunt, with ſome ' ſurprize. " Pray, what ſervice is ſhe " leaving? How could any body part " with ſuch an excellent ſervant? Is " her miſtreſs dead?"—" That is the " caſe," returned Mrs. Du Frainville, ' who had foreſeen the queſtion; " her " lady died a few days ago, with whom " ſhe lived many years; beſides, ſhe " belongs to a very worthy family, " for whom I have a great eſteem."— " Well, Madam, when will you ſend " her to me?" ſaid my aunt. " This " minute," replied Mrs. Du Frain- ' ville; " I left her but on the terrace " of your garden. How great ſoever " her merit and good ſenſe is, I was " not willing that ſhe ſhould be pre- " ſent to hear the encomiums I have " given her. She does not know her " worth ſo well as I do; nor is it ne- " ceſſary that ſhe ſhould: you need " only ſend one of your ſervants for " her."—" No, no!" ſaid I; " I will " go myſelf:" and went immediately. ' I fancied ſhe muſt be uneaſy, and ' that ſhe ſtood in need of encourage- ' ment. " Come, Madam," cried I, ' as I came up to her, " you are ac- " cepted; my aunt admits you into " your own houſe; though ſhe thinks " ſhe only receives you into hers."— " Alas, Miſs! I tremble all over; and " am afraid of ſhewing myſelf in the " confuſion I am in," replied ſhe, in ' a tone which was but too great a ' proof of what ſhe ſaid. " Pray, why " do you tremble?" ſaid I to her.

" Is

" Is it becauſe you are going to ap-
" pear before one of the beſt women
" in the world, to whom you will ſoon
" be very dear, and who, perhaps, in a
" fortnight's time, may tenderly em-
" brace you, and thank you for this
" deceit you put upon her? Come,
" Madam, you have no reaſon to be
" troubled; what have you to fear?
" You are ſure of Mrs. Du Frain-
" ville; and, I hope, of me too."—
" Of you, Miſs!" returned ſhe; " you
" make me bluſh. Who ſhould I de-
" pend upon, if not on you? Come,
" I am ready to follow you; my con-
" fuſion is almoſt diſſipated." On
' this we went into the room ſhe had
' been ſo much afraid of: however, in
' ſpite of all her courage, ſhe appeared
' with an exceſſive timorouſneſs; but
' which, joined to her amiable and
' modeſt countenance, was only to her
' an additional charm. For my part,
' I ſmiled with an air of ſatisfaction,
' in order to excite the ſame diſpoſition
' in my aunt, who looked at me to ſee
' if I liked her. " You are to ſtay
" here, Mrs. Brunon," ſaid Mrs. Du
' Frainville; " this lady accepts of
" you: and I cannot give you a greater
" proof of my friendſhip than in plac-
" ing you with her. I have aſſured her
" that ſhe will be well ſatisfied with
" you; and am not afraid of having
" impoſed upon her."—" I dare not
" anſwer for any thing but my zeal
" and utmoſt endeavours to pleaſe the
" lady," replied the fictitious Brunon,
' with a moſt engaging air. My aunt
' ſeemed at once prejudiced in her fa-
' vour. " I believe," ſaid ſhe to Mrs.
' Du Frainville, " I may thank you
" before-hand for my chambermaid;
" and I am much miſtaken if I ſhall
" not end my life with her. I ſhall
" make no agreement with you, Bru-
" non," added ſhe: " you may truſt
" to my generoſity; and, I am per-
" ſuaded, we ſhall be well ſatisfied
" with each other. You are to lie in
" a room adjoining to mine; and I
" will order one of my women to ſhew
" it you."—" No, no, aunt!" ſaid I,
' as ſhe was going to ring the bell;
" you need not call any body; I am
" going to my room, and will ſhew
" her hers." As I left my aunt, we
' heard her ſay to Mrs. Du Frain-
' ville—" This woman has been as
" beautiful as an angel!" At this I
' looked at Brunon—" Do not you
" think," ſaid I, ſmiling, " this ſhort
" diſcourſe is a pretty good omen?
" Her ſon is half juſtified already."—
" Yes, Miſs!" replied ſhe, ſqueezing
' my hand: " it is a good beginning;
" and Heaven ſeems to bleſs the part
" you have made me take." We ſtaid
' ſome time together; for I went out
' of the room to acquaint her with a
' great many minute things; which I
' deſired her not to neglect, and which
' I knew would exceedingly pleaſe my
' aunt. She liſtened to me, quite tran-
' ſported with gratitude; and it was
' impoſſible to expreſs a more lively
' ſenſe of an obligation than ſhe then
' did: her heart ſeemed every minute
' to ſwell with new tranſports of joy;
' which ſhe always concluded with
' the moſt affectionate careſſes. In a
' week's time, my aunt ſeemed perfect-
' ly charmed with her behaviour; and
' let me know that, if ſhe continued
' the ſame, ſhe would be very bounti-
' ful to her; which, ſhe ſaid, ſhe knew
' I would not be ſorry for. " I en-
" treat you to be ſo," ſaid I: " you
" have a mind too good, too generous,
" not to recompenſe her zeal and at-
" tachment to you; for I can ſee ſhe
" loves you; and her ſervice is ac-
" companied with a ſincere tenderneſs
" for your perſon."—" Thou art in
" the right," returned ſhe; " I think
" ſo too: but I wonder that her virtue
" and beauty did not, when ſhe was
" young, turn the brains of ſome
" young gentleman, and force him to
" marry her; for ſhe has actually one
" of thoſe miſchievous faces which are
" apt to cauſe the utmoſt diſturbance
" in a family!"—" It is true, Ma-
" dam," replied I; " ſhe muſt cer-
" tainly have ſpent her life in a very
" obſcure retirement; and, I fancy,
" my couſin Durſan muſt have had the
" misfortune to meet with juſt ſuch a
" perſon," added I, with a ſimple, un-
' deſigning air: " but in the country
" where Brunon lived, a girl, though
" ever ſo charming, is buried alive."
' My aunt ſhrugged up her ſhoulders
' at this diſcourſe, and made me no
' anſwer. I had ſeen Mr. Durſan and
' his ſon ſeveral times in the wood, as
' before; but the laſt time I found the
' father ſo ſick, with ſuch a livid and
' bloated countenance, and with eyes
' ſo dead, that I immediately thought

' he

'he would not be able to return; and 'I was not deceived. "Dear couſin," 'ſaid he to me, "I find myſelf dying. "Mrs. Du Frainville, ſince I have "been at her houſe, has procured me "a phyſician, and all the aſſiſtance "that lay in her power: but it was "too late; my illneſs has increaſed "ever ſince; therefore I came to-day, "for the laſt time, to recommend to "you the intereſt of my unfortunate "family." I endeavoured to comfort 'him, by giving him freſh aſſurances 'of my zeal and affection, and by re-'lating the happy ſituation his affairs 'were in by his wife's having ſuch a 'ſhare of the old lady's eſteem and 'friendſhip; and therefore entreated 'him to be eaſy, becauſe his misfor-'tunes might poſſibly be over that 'very night. As I could not ſtay, he 'roſe up to teſtify his thankfulneſs, 'and bid me adieu: but whether the 'ſubject of our converſation had ex-'hauſted his ſpirits, or whether he was 'too much fatigued by walking from 'Mrs. Du Frainville's coach to that 'part of the wood, he was ſeized with 'a ſtoppage of his breath, and fell 'down again upon the place where he 'had ſat, and where we thought he 'would have expired.

'His wife, who was coming to us, 'heard the cries of her ſon, and ran 'to aſſiſt him; whilſt I trembled to 'ſuch a degree, that I could hardly 'ſupport myſelf. As I had a ſmelling-'bottle in my pocket, I pulled it out, 'and held it to his noſe. At laſt, he 'came a little to himſelf; but it was 'impoſſible for him to walk to the 'coach, or endure the jolting of it 'from thence to Mrs. Du Frainville's. 'His wife and ſon, both as pale as 'death, looked at me with counte-'nances which expreſſed the diſtrac-'tion of their minds, and aſked me 'what they ſhould do. "There is "no time to heſitate," cried I: "he "can be carried no where but to the "caſtle; and, while my aunt is with "Mrs. Du Frainville, I will fetch "ſomebody to convey him thither."— "To the caſtle!" cried his wife. "Oh, "Miſs! then we are ruined!"—"No," 'ſaid I; "do not diſturb yourſelf; "we have nothing to fear; I will take "every thing upon myſelf." I then 'ran to the houſe, and brought two 'men, who carried him into a little 'apartment on the ground-floor; where 'I ordered him to be put to bed, fully 'perſuaded that he had not long to 'live: and, therefore, as it was al-'moſt impoſſible to procure him either 'a phyſician or confeſſor unknown to 'Mrs. Durſan; and as I was afraid, 'on the other hand, he would die with-'out ſeeing her; I concluded that I 'muſt begin by acquainting her that 'there was a ſick perſon in the houſe. "Brunon," ſaid I, abruptly, to Mrs. 'Durſan, "do not leave the gentle-"man.—But as for you," ſaid I to 'the ſervants, "you may retire.—And, "pray, Sir," added I, addreſſing my-'ſelf to young Mr. Durſan, "be ſo ".good as to come with me to my "aunt." He followed me with the 'tears in his eyes; and in the way I 'acquainted him with what I was go-'ing to ſay. We found Mrs. Du 'Frainville taking leave of my aunt; 'and they were both in the utmoſt 'ſurprize to ſee us enter the room to-'gether. "This gentleman's father," 'ſaid I to my aunt, "is in the apart-"ment below, where I have ordered "him to be put to-bed. He came "with his ſon to thank you for the "offers of ſervice you have made him; "but the fatigue of the way, together "with a violent illneſs he has been in "for ſeveral months, had ſo exhauſted "his ſpirits, that we feared he would "die in the court: I ran to his aſſiſ-"tance, and have put him in that "room, where I left him with Bru-"non; and really, Madam, he is ſo "ill that I fear he will not live till "night."—"Dear Sir," cried Mrs. 'Du Frainville, "is your father ſo ill "as that? I am extremely ſorry to "hear it." She thought fit to imitate 'my diſcretion in concealing his name. "Oh, Madam!" added ſhe, addreſſing 'herſelf to Mrs. Durſan, "I am af-"flicted at this melancholy news!"— "You know him, then, Madam?" 'cried my aunt. "Yes, I know him "and all his family; he is related, on "his mother's ſide, to the beſt families "in this country: he came to ſee me, "ſome days ago, with his wife and "ſon, when I offered them my houſe; "and am even putting an end to the "unhappy affair which brought him "hither. He has a dropſy, Madam; "and is, beſides, overwhelmed with "grief: and I implore all your good-

"neſs

" neſs in his behalf. You can never " beſtow your favours better, nor on " an object who has a greater claim to " them. Permit me to leave you; for " I muſt ſee him."—" Do, Madam," ' returned my aunt; " let us all go to- " gether: my niece ſhall lend me her " arm."

' I did not think it proper that ſhe ' ſhould ſee him yet; and conſidered ' that, by deferring it a little longer, ' chance might preſent us with ſome ' more intereſting circumſtances, in ' which there might be leſs danger of ' ſucceſs; for I feared ſo much preci- ' pitation might ſpoil our ſcheme with ' a perſon of my aunt's penetration and ' inflexible temper, and give our pro- ' ceedings too much the air of a plot: ' for ſhe might have conſidered her ſon's ' illneſs, if he recovered, as a mere ' farce contrived to ſoften and work ' upon her; whereas a little delay might ' remove every ſuſpicion of that kind. ' I had ordered a phyſician and prieſt to ' be ſent for; and, as I did not doubt but ' Mr. Durſan would receive the eucha- ' riſt, I deſigned to introduce her in the ' midſt of that awful ceremony; a mo- ' ment that appeared much more likely ' to enſure ſucceſs than the preſent. I ' therefore perſuaded her to ſtay a little ' longer, and told her I would take ' care that nothing ſhould be wanting ' which might be of ſervice to Mrs. ' Du Frainville's friend; and, in the ' mean time, would let her know how ' he did, and when he would be in a ' condition to ſpeak to her. Mrs. Du ' Frainville, who regulated her conduct ' by mine, was of the ſame opinion. ' Young Mr. Durſan joined with us, ' and begged of her not to leave the ' room; ſo that ſhe let us go, after ' having ſaid ſome obliging things to ' this young gentleman, who, as he left ' her, kiſſed her hand in a moſt tender ' and reſpectful manner; an action ' that ſeemed to make ſome impreſſion ' upon her. We found poor Brunon ' bathed in tears; and the phyſician, ' who had juſt come with the prieſt, aſ- ' ſured us he had but a few hours to ' live. After confeſſion, the prieſt told ' us that he deſired him to entreat Mrs. ' Durſan to come to him before he re- ' ceived the euchariſt. "Are you deſir- " ed, Sir," ſaid I, "to tell my aunt who " he is?"—"No, Miſs," ſaid he; "my " commiſſion extends no farther than " to deſire her to come to him." The ' patient then called me with a weak ' voice, and I went to him. " Dear " couſin," ſaid he, " I beg that you " and Mrs. Du Frainville will ſecond " this gentleman's entreaties."—"We " will, Sir," ſaid I; " and I think it " would be proper that your wife, for " whom ſhe has a peculiar friendſhip, " ſhould accompany us, while your " ſon ſtays here with you." We then ' went to the old lady: " Madam," ' ſaid the prieſt with a moſt ſerious air, " I am come to tell you, that the poor " gentleman below deſires to ſee you " before he dies, that he may thank " you for your kindneſs to him, and " acquaint you with ſomething that is " of importance to you."—" Of im- " portance to me!" replied ſhe with ' ſome ſurprize: " what can he have " to ſay to me, that I am concerned " in?"—"You have, he ſays, a ſon," ' returned the prieſt, " whom he knew " before he arrived in this country; " and it is of that ſon he is deſirous of " ſpeaking to you."—" Of my ſon! " Ah, Sir!" cried ſhe, after a deep ' ſigh, " deſire him not to trouble me " with any thing on that ſubject. Tell " him that I am extremely ſorry for the " condition he is in; that in caſe God " ſhould take him to himſelf, there is " no ſervice which his wife and ſon " may not expect from me. I have " never, indeed, ſeen her; but if ſhe " has not been informed of the condi- " tion he is in, he need only ſay where " ſhe is, and I will immediately ſend " my coach for her: and if the ſick " gentleman thinks he owes me any " acknowledgment, the only teſtimony " I deſire of it is, to be diſpenſed from " knowing what that unhappy wretch " who calls me his mother, has deſired " him to communicate to me. How- " ever, if it is abſolutely neceſſary I " ſhould know it, he may be ſatisfied " with telling it you, Sir."—" It may " be a ſecret proper to be revealed to " none but you, Madam," replied the ' eccleſiaſtick; " and which you would " be ſorry to have entruſted to another. " Conſider, Madam, that the perſon " who ſends me is a dying man; he may " have eſſential reaſons for ſpeaking " to none but you; and it would be " very cruel, Madam, to refuſe to " hearken to his entreaties in the " condition he is in."—" No, Sir,"

' returned

'returned ſhe, "the promiſe he may "have made my ſon, to reveal his ſe-"cret to none but me, does not oblige "me to hear it: however, I conſent he "ſhould acquaint you with it; and if "I am imprudent in this, I will ac-"cuſe nobody but myſelf."—"Pray, "aunt," ſaid I then, "let me beg of "you to ſurmount this reluctance: "the unknown gentleman, who fore-"ſaw it, begged Mrs. Du Frainville "and me to ſecond this gentleman's en-"treaties."—"Yes, Madam," rejoin-'ed Mrs. Du Frainville, "I promiſed "him to bring you down to him; be-"cauſe he aſſured me that you would "infallibly reproach yourſelf, if you "refuſed to hear him."—"How can "you teaze me ſo?" cried the old lady 'with much emotion: "what can "he have to ſay to me?—What is the "matter, Brunon?" added ſhe, caſt-'ing her eyes upon her: "what "makes you weep?"—"It is becauſe "ſhe knows the ſick gentleman," re-'turned I; "and is concerned to ſee "him dying."—"What! do you "know him too!" replied my aunt. "Yes, Madam," returned ſhe; "he "has relations for whom I ſhall ever "have ſentiments of tenderneſs and "reſpect: and I would name them to "you, if he did not deſire to be un-"known."—"I do not deſire to know "what he would conceal," replied my 'aunt; "but ſince you know who he "is, and that he ſays he has been ac-"quainted with my ſon, have you "never ſeen them together?"—"Yes, "Madam, I own I have;" ſaid ſhe, "I have even known his ſon from his "moſt tender years."—"His ſon!" 'returned ſhe; "has he then children?" —"I think he has but one, Madam," 'Brunon replied. "Oh, that he had "never been born!" cried my aunt; "what will become of him?—You "pierce my heart, Brunon: but ſpeak; "hide nothing from me; you are bet-"ter informed than you would ſeem to "be. Where is his father now? What "ſituation was he in when you left "him?"—"He was miſerable, Ma-"dam," replied Brunon, caſting down 'her eyes with a melancholy air. "He "was miſerable, you ſay; ſay rather "he would be ſo," returned ſhe. But "tell me all; is he a widower?"— "No, Madam," ſaid ſhe, with a con-'fuſion which was obſerved by none 'but us who knew her. "I have ſeen "them all three; but in ſuch a condi-"tion as, had you ſeen them, would "certainly have diſarmed your indig-"nation."—"I have heard enough," 'ſaid my aunt with a deep ſigh: "what "a marriage! She is then with him; "that woman whom the wretch choſe "for his wife, and who is a diſhonour "to him!" Here the fictitious Brunon 'bluſhed, which gave us a very ſenſi-'ble pain; but ſhe preſently recovered 'herſelf, and replied with a ſweet and 'compoſed air—"I could engage your "eſteem for her, if you could only "pardon her want of birth and for-"tune. She is virtuous, Madam; all "who know her will tell you ſo. Her "virtue alone, it is true, could not en-"title her to the honour of being Mrs. "Durſan; but I myſelf muſt be great-"ly miſerable, if virtue is not ſuffi-"cient to prevent our being deſpica-"ble."—"How can you talk ſo, Bru-"non," returned ſhe: "if ſhe was like "you indeed—!"

'At this I perceived Brunon trem-'bled, and looked at me to know what 'ſhe ſhould do; but while I was deli-'berating with myſelf, my aunt aroſe 'ſuddenly to go down with us, and 'prevented this favourable opportunity 'of bringing on the intended reconci-'liation; and was ſo quick, that the 'opportunity was even loſt when Bru-'non caſt her eyes upon me; and there-'fore I thought it better to delay it a 'little longer. Such critical moments 'as theſe ought to be laid hold of; and 'this I ſaw we had let ſlip. However, 'we went down, not one of us having 'the courage to utter a word. As for 'me, I felt a palpitation at my heart; 'and I began to be uneaſy on my aunt's 'account; for I feared we were going 'to expoſe her to more than ſhe could 'bear: but the blow ſhe was going to 'receive was my own work, and there-'fore I could not go back. At laſt we 'got to the ſick gentleman's apartment: 'my aunt ſighed as ſhe entered the 'room; Brunon had a mortal paleneſs; 'my knees ſmote each other; and Mrs. 'Du Frainville followed us in an un-'eaſy and mournful ſilence. The con-'feſſor entered the room firſt, and went 'to the patient, whom they had raiſed 'up a little in his bed. His ſon, who 'was weeping by him, retired a little: 'it began to grow duſkiſh; the bed

'was

'was placed in the darkeſt part of the 'room, and the curtains were drawn on 'that ſide next the light. "Sir," ſaid 'the eccleſiaſtick to the poor dying 'man, "I bring you Mrs. Durſan, "whom you deſired to ſee before you "received the euchariſt: here ſhe is." 'The ſon then lifted up his weak and 'trembling hand, and endeavoured to 'pull off his cap; but my aunt, who 'had juſt come up to him, reached out 'her hand to prevent him. "No, Sir! "no!" ſaid ſhe; "pray remain as you "are: you are but too well entitled "to diſpenſe with ceremonies." We 'then placed her in an elbow-chair at 'his bed's head, and ſtood by her. "You deſired, Sir, to ſpeak with me; "would you have the company retire?" 'ſaid ſhe, rather liſtening than looking 'at him. Here he fetched a deep ſigh; 'and, as her arm was reſting upon the 'bed, he reached his hand to her's, 'took hold of it, and, in her ſurprize, 'had time to preſs it to his lips, and 'imprint upon it kiſſes intermingled 'with ſome ſighs, which were half 'ſtifled by his weakneſs and difficulty 'of breathing. At this action the 'mother appeared troubled; ſeemed 'to have a confuſed idea of the truth; 'and looked at him with attention and 'ſurprize. "What are you doing," 'ſaid ſhe, in a voice which her aſtoniſh-'ment rendered louder than uſual; "who are you, Sir?"—"Your victim, "mother!" returned he, in the tone of 'one juſt ready to expire. "My ſon! "Oh, unhappy Durſan! I know thee "again; but this knowledge is enough "to make me die with grief," cried 'ſhe, falling back in her chair, where 'ſhe turned pale, and continued mo-'tionleſs, as if ſhe had fainted away; 'but, however, ſhe did not, though ſhe 'was not well. Our cries, together 'with the aſſiſtance we gave her, in-'ſenſibly raiſing her ſpirits—"What "a ſurprize, Terviere," cried ſhe, after 'ſome ſighs, "haſt thou expoſed me "to!"—"Alas, aunt!" replied I, "ſhould I have deprived you of the "pleaſure of pardoning your dying "ſon? Has not this young man, too, a "claim to a place in your heart? Is "not he worthy of being loved; and "could we deprive him of your ten-"derneſs," added I, ſhewing her her 'grandſon, who immediately threw 'himſelf at her feet. The tender, and 'already conquered, grandmother, held 'out one of her hands, which he kiſſed 'with tears of joy; and we all wept 'with him. Mrs. Durſan, who was 'ſtill only Brunon, the prieſt himſelf, 'Mrs. Du Frainville, and I, all con-'tributed to the ſoftening my dear 'aunt, who was in tears herſelf, and 'ſaw nothing about her but tears, 'which thanked her for ſuffering her-'ſelf to be touched. But, however, 'all was not done yet; we were ſtill 'to ſoften her in favour of Brunon, 'who was on her knees behind young 'Durſan; and who, notwithſtanding 'the ſigns I made to her, durſt not ad-'vance, leſt ſhe ſhould injure her huſ-'band and ſon, by being an obſtacle 'to their reconciliation; and, indeed, 'we had hitherto only recalled the ten-'derneſs of an offended mother: but 'now ſhe was to triumph over her 'hatred and contempt for a ſtranger, 'whom ſhe loved indeed, but without 'knowing her, and under another 'name. Meanwhile, my aunt conti-'nually looked upon young Durſan 'with complacency, without taking 'from him her hand, which he ſtill 'held in his. "Ariſe, my child!" 'ſaid ſhe at laſt, "I have nothing to "reproach thee with. Alas! how can "I reſiſt thee, when I could not hold "out againſt thy father!" Here the 'careſſes of this young man, and our 'tears, redoubled. "Son," ſaid ſhe, 'then addreſſing herſelf to the ſick gen-'tleman, "is there no remedy to be "had for you? Let us ſend every "where for help; we have phyſicians "in the next town, let them be ſent "for immediately."—"But, aunt," 'ſaid I, "you ſtill forget one perſon 'who is dear to your children; for 'whom we all intereſt ourſelves, and 'who begs to be permitted to appear 'before you. "I underſtand thee," 'ſaid ſhe: "well, I forgive her. But "I am old, I cannot live long; and "may therefore be diſpenſed with from "ſeeing her."—"That is impoſſible, "Madam," returned I: "you have "already ſeen her; you know her; "Brunon is a witneſs you do."—"I "know her!" cried ſhe; "and Bru-"non ſays that I do! Oh, where is "ſhe?"—"At your feet," replied 'young Mr. Durſan. My aunt, im-'moveable at this new ſpectacle, ſat 'ſome time without pronouncing a

'word; and then, holding out her 'hand to her amiable daughter— "Come, then, Brunon," ſaid ſhe, 'embracing her; "come, I will pay you 'for your ſervice: you ſaid I knew her; "why did you not ſay I loved her too." 'Brunon, who from henceforward I 'ſhall call Mrs. Durſan, appeared ſo 'ſenſible of my aunt's goodneſs, that 'ſhe ſeemed almoſt out of her ſenſes; 'ſhe embraced her ſon; ſhe loaded Mrs. 'Du Frainville and I with careſſes: ſhe 'then ran to her huſband, and fell on 'his neck; entreated him to take cou'rage; when he, though almoſt expir'ing, aſked for his mother, who em'braced him in her turn, extremely 'ſorry to ſee him ſo ill. However, he 'every moment grew weaker; and 'therefore preſſed the eccleſiaſtick to 'conclude the reſt of his office: but 'as, after what had paſſed, he wanted 'ſome time for recollection, we thought 'it proper to retire: and my aunt, un'able to ſupport ſuch violent emotions, 'deſired to be put to bed; when her 'ordinary indiſpoſitions increaſed to 'ſuch a degree, that ſhe could not riſe 'to ſee her ſon again, who expired 'about ten at night. From this time, 'ſhe fell into a deep melancholy; and 'was ſo extremely dejected, that I ſin'cerely pitied her: and this was fol'lowed by a fever, which never left her. 'I need not mention Mrs. Durſan's 'concern for the loſs of her huſband, 'nor that of the ſon for being deprived 'of a father. The will whereby Mr. 'Durſan was diſinherited was not yet 'revoked; and, perhaps, they might be 'apprehenſive that my aunt would die 'before ſhe had made another: though 'it would not have been my fault; for 'I had already preſſed her ſeveral times 'to do it; but ſhe always put me off 'till the next day. At laſt ſhe deſired 'Mrs. Du Frainville and I to leave her 'alone, and preſently after ſent for us 'in again; and ordered Mrs. Durſan 'and her ſon to be called; when ſhe 'gave a paper ſealed up to Mrs. Dur'ſan. "This," ſaid ſhe, "is the "will I made in favour of my niece. "My intention, ſince the death of my "ſon, was to cancel it; and ſhe has "herſelf been continually ſoliciting me "to it: and I now leave it in your hands, "that you may be convinced I had left "her all my eſtate." Then taking 'another paper, ſhe delivered it, ſealed 'up, to Mrs. Du Frainville. "This," 'ſaid ſhe, "is my laſt will; and I deſire "this lady to take it under her care: and "though I do not doubt but you will be "well ſatisfied with it, and readily ful"fil the ſmall diſpoſitions you will find "in it, I think it proper to recommend "them to you, and let you know that "they are what are of the higheſt con"cern to me; the ſincere deſire of my "heart; and that you cannot give me a "greater proof of your gratitude, nor "better honour my memory, than by "faithfully executing what I here re"quire of you. And to excite you the "more readily to comply with it, I "muſt deſire you to reflect, that all the "advantages you now receive are ſo "many obligations for which you are "indebted to my niece."

'She ſtopped here, and deſired us to 'leave her to her reſt; and ſix days af'ter this expired. You will eaſily con'ceive that my grief muſt be exceſſive: 'Mrs. Durſan uſed her utmoſt endea'vours to comfort me, though I was 'very little affected by what ſhe could 'ſay, becauſe ſhe did not ſeem to be 'ſufficiently concerned herſelf; but her 'ſon ſucceeded better: he had, in my 'opinion, a more real ſadneſs, and, at 'leaſt, regretted the loſs of his father 'with all his heart; and, indeed, never 'mentioned my aunt, but with expreſ'ſions of the moſt tender gratitude; 'without thinking, as his mother did, 'of that ſplendor to which they were 'raiſed: however, he entered ſincerely 'into my affliction, and this might 'make me judge more favourably of 'the reſt. Mrs. Du Frainville came 'again to the caſtle two days after my 'aunt's deceaſe, with the ſealed papers, 'which were opened in the preſence of 'ſeveral witneſſes, with all the forms 'that were judged neceſſary. My aunt, 'by this writing, reſtored her grandſon 'to all the rights his father had for'feited by his marriage; but it was 'on condition that he ſhould marry me; 'for, in caſe he ſhould marry another, 'or that he was not agreeable to me, 'he ſhould be obliged to give me the 'third part of all his eſtates and ef'fects. That the affair of our mar'riage, however, ſhould be concluded 'in a year, from the day that the will 'was opened; and that I ſhould re'ceive three thouſand livres, till our 'nuptials were conſummated, or I had

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'taken poſſeſſion of a third part of his 'eſtate. "All theſe conditions," ſaid 'he, while this article was reading, "are ſuperfluous; I will have nothing "without my couſin." At this I caſt 'down my eyes, and bluſhed with con-'fuſion and pleaſure, without making 'him any reply. "Stay, ſon, till the "whole is read," cried Mrs. Durſan, 'in a tone rough and haſty enough; 'which neither Mrs. Du Frainville 'nor I could help taking notice of. "I ſhould have been aſhamed to have "been ſilent," replied he in a mild tone; 'and then they read on. The rudeneſs 'with which Mrs. Durſan treated her 'ſon, probably proceeded from her be-'ing acquainted with the meanneſs of 'my circumſtances; for he was now 'qualified to aſpire to one of the moſt 'ſplendid rank and fortune. However, 'ſome days after, ſhe could not forbear 'telling Mrs. Du Frainville, that I 'had great reaſon to regret the loſs of 'an aunt, who had been ſo prodigi-'ouſly bountiful to me. "What do "you mean by bountiful?" replied 'that lady, who was ſhocked at her 'ungrateful manner of ſpeaking of me: "you ought not to forget that you "would have had nothing, had it not "been for her diſintereſted and gene-"rous induſtry. Pray, do not look up-"on her as a girl who has nothing; "for your ſon, in marrying her, will "poſſeſs the heir of all his eſtate. "Thus he thinks of it himſelf; and "you, Madam, cannot think other-"wiſe, without being guilty of an in-"gratitude, of which I do not believe "you capable."—"As to their mar-"riage," replied Mrs. Durſan with a 'ſmile, "my ſon is yet ſo young, that "it will be time enough to think of "that ſome years hence."—"As you "pleaſe, Madam," returned Mrs. Du 'Frainville, who would not condeſcend 'to make her a formal anſwer, and who 'immediately left her with ſo much 'coolneſs, that Mrs. Durſan made 'it a pretence for ſeeing her no more.

'What a falſe idea had we formed 'of this woman! Not ſatisfied with de-'ferring our marriage, ſhe conſulted 'the moſt able lawyers, to know if it 'was not poſſible to ſet aſide my aunt's 'will, and deprive me of all that ſhe 'was ſo good as to leave me. This 'Mrs. Du Frainville acquainted me 'with: but young Durſan durſt not 'take notice of it to me, though it 'threw him into the utmoſt deſpair. 'He then loved me beyond expreſſion; 'nor did I diſſemble my tenderneſs for 'him; and the worſe his mother uſed 'me, the dearer he appeared to me, 'whom I thought ſo different from 'her: thus my heart recompenſed him 'for not reſembling his mother. But 'how ungrateful ſoever ſhe was, ſhe 'had a prodigious aſcendant over him, 'ſo that he had not the courage to 'ſpeak to her as he ought to have done: 'but his mother's ingratitude extend-'ed farther than endeavouring to de-'prive me of the third part of the 'eſtate; ſhe even reſolved to drive me 'from her houſe, in hopes that her ſon, 'ceaſing to ſee me, would overcome his 'tenderneſs, and conſequently be more 'eaſily brought to comply with her de-'ſires. "Miſs," ſaid ſhe one day, "how comes it that Mrs. Du Frain-"ville is ſtill your friend, though ſhe "is no longer mine?"—"I muſt aſk "you that, Madam," returned I: "you know, better than I, what has "paſſed between you."—"Better "than you!" cried ſhe, ſmiling, with 'an ironical air. "You have a mind "to be a little pleaſant: ſhe would "have been more tractable, if you "would have been ſo; the marriage is "not in ſo great a hurry."—"It is "not I that would have it ſo," ſaid I; "but ſhe does not think you ought to "defer it, if I conſent to it."—"How, "Miſs! You have a mind to quar-"rel with me, too," cried ſhe, leaving 'me. "Do you reproach us already "for the ſervice you have done us? "Truly, ſo promiſing a temper a-"larms me for my ſon."—"I have "known Brunon do me more juſtice," 'cried I as ſhe went off. But from 'this moment we ſeldom ſpoke to each 'other; and her repeated affronts made 'her ſo intolerable to me, that three 'months after my aunt's deceaſe I was 'obliged to leave the caſtle, notwith-'ſtanding the ſorrow of her ſon, whom 'I left ſick with grief, and at variance 'with her. I could neither ſee nor 'acquaint him with the day of my go-'ing, his mother alledging ſo many 'unaccountable reaſons for not con-'ſenting to it. When the time was 'come which I had fixed upon for my 'departure, ſhe told me ſhe could not 'comprehend why I ſhould deſire to

'leave her; and that her ſon, who was 'in a fever, would be unable to ſup-'port ſuch a painful ſeparation. So 'much deceit gave me ſuch a diſguſt 'to her, that I gave her no anſwer, but 'ſtepped directly into the chaiſe Mrs. 'Du Frainville had ſent for me. I 'will not mention the rage that lady 'was in at the recital I made her of 'the ill-treatment I had been expoſed 'to at the caſtle. I had wrote twice 'to my mother, after my aunt's de-'ceaſe, but had received no anſwer; 'and had not heard the leaſt news of 'her for ſeveral years paſt; and this 'gave me very great uneaſineſs. I ſaw 'myſelf ſure of nothing. "What "will become of me," thought I, "if Mrs. Durſan ſhould gain her de-"ſign, and have my aunt's will de-"clared void?" Nor could I abuſe 'Mrs. Du Frainville's goodneſs, who 'kindly offered me a retreat: ſo that I 'could only have recourſe to my mo-'ther; and, as one of Mrs. Du Frain-'ville's friends was going to Paris, I 'was willing to take the advantage of 'her company; which I did a fortnight 'or three weeks after my leaving the 'caſtle. The day before that of our 'departure, Mrs. Durſan came to ſee 'me; paid me what was due of my 'penſion; and deſired, if I ſhould want 'any more money, I would let her 'know it, and ſhe would remit to me 'whatever ſum I had occaſion for. 'This diſcourſe was attended with the 'ſtrongeſt proteſtations of affection; 'which, indeed, had but one fault; 'their being too polite: I had thought 'them leſs inſincere, had ſhe ſpoke with 'more ſimplicity and freedom; for a 'genuine good heart, and a ſincere 'friendſhip, are ſtrangers to compli-'ments. Her ſon ſtill continued ſick; 'and as I had no hopes of ſeeing him 'before I ſet out, I left a letter for 'him, which Mrs. Du Frainville pro-'miſed to deliver into his own hands.

'My companion and I travelled, with 'ſeveral paſſengers, in a ſtage-coach. 'When we were at an inn, about 'twenty leagues from Paris, we took 'up a lady of a genteel appearance; 'ſhe was tall, and ſeemed near fifty 'years old; ſhe appeared as if ſhe had 'juſt recovered from a fit of illneſs: 'but, notwithſtanding her paleneſs, 'her features ſeemed formed with an 'admirable delicacy, and had ſome-'thing in them that ſhewed ſhe was a 'lady of quality; for her perſon had 'that natural air of ſuperiority which 'does not proceed from pride, but 'from being accuſtomed to the regards 'and reſpect of thoſe of the moſt ex-'alted ſtations. Scarce had we got 'half a league from the inn, when the 'motion of the coach diſordered our 'new companion, on which we pro-'poſed to ſtop; but ſhe would not con-'ſent to it, and ſaid that ſhe was only 'a little ſick, and it would ſoon be 'over. As I filled one of the beſt 'places, I preſſed her to change ſeats 'with me, in a manner as ſincere as 'obliging: ſhe appeared extremely 'touched at my entreaties; and refuſed 'me in ſuch an engaging manner, that 'I could not forbear inſiſting upon her 'compliance with the greater eager-'neſs; but I could not prevail upon 'her. However, her indiſpoſition ſoon 'went off. As ſhe was placed near 'me, we frequently converſed toge-'ther. Mrs. Darciere, my compa-'nion, being pretty old, frequently 'called me her daughter when ſhe 'ſpoke to me; and, upon this, the un-'known lady thought ſhe had been my 'mother; but I undeceived her, and 'told her I was going to Paris to my 'mother, whom I had not ſeen for a 'great while. "I wiſh I had been "that mother," ſaid ſhe, with a ſweet 'and tender air, without enquiring any 'farther, or mentioning her own af-'fairs. When we arrived at the place 'at which we were to dine, it being a 'fine day, I was deſirous of taking a 'walk in the garden to refreſh myſelf, 'by taſting the freſh air, as well as to 'recreate myſelf a little, being weary 'with ſitting ſo long in the coach. 'When dinner was ready, I went to 'rejoin my fellow travellers, but found 'the unknown lady was wanting to 'compleat our company; and, upon 'enquiry, was told by our landlord, 'that ſhe deſired to dine by herſelf in 'another room; on which I immedi-'ately went to her, and found her go-'ing to dinner, with a ſmall ſlice of 'boiled meat, and a little ſoup, before 'her. I confeſs ſuch a frugal meal 'ſurprized me; but I diſſembled my 'aſtoniſhment. "How comes it, "Madam," ſaid I, "that you leave "us, and that we are not honoured "with your company at dinner? We

"cannot

" cannot conſent that you ſhould de-
" ſert us; but I am happily come in
" good time, for you have not touched
" any thing yet: you are ſent for by
" the whole company; and not a ſoul
" of us will ſit down to table till you
" come." As ſoon as ſhe ſaw me, ſhe
' roſe up in a hurry, as if ſhe would
' keep me from the ſight of her dinner;
' on which I conformed myſelf to her
' behaviour, and advanced no farther.
" Pray, Miſs," ſaid ſhe, " do not take
" any notice of me: I have been a
" great while ſick, and muſt obſerve a
" particular regimen which is neceſ-
" ſary for the recovery of my health,
" which I ſhould never be able to do
" in company; and I am ſure, Miſs,
" you would be ſo far from perſuad-
" ing me to expoſe myſelf to any dan-
" ger, that you would be the firſt to
" hinder me from it." I readily be-
' lieved what ſhe ſaid, but did not the
' leſs inſiſt on her going with me. " I
" cannot conſent to leave you thus
" alone, Madam," ſaid I: " you may
" truſt yourſelf to me, and we need
" only tell the people to join your din-
" ner to ours." On this I took hold
' of her arm, and obliged her to follow
' me, without knowing what to reply,
' notwithſtanding her reluctance to ac-
' company me: when, ſtopping ſhort,
' with an air of ſadneſs—" Dear Miſs,"
' cried ſhe, in a melancholy tone, " how
" pleaſing, but yet painful, is this
" obliging tenderneſs! Shall I be plain
" with you? I have been in the coun-
" try, where I intended to ſtay only a
" month for the recovery of my health;
" but, being taken ill of a fever, I
" have been obliged to ſtay much longer
" than I intended, and have but juſt
" money ſufficient to carry me to Pa-
" ris, where I ſhall be to-morrow: this
" I tell you as a ſecret; and therefore I
" beg you will excuſe me to the com-
" pany, on account of my ill ſtate of
" health." However careleſsly ſhe af-
' fected to mention her want of mo-
' ney, I could not help being moved at
' what ſhe ſaid, and diſcovering, at the
' ſame time, that ſhe wanted that tran-
' quillity in her countenance which ſhe
' expreſſed in her words. " How, Ma-
" dam," ſaid I, with a gay and lively
' frankneſs, and at the ſame time put-
' ting my purſe into her hand, " ſhall
" I have the honour to be good for
" ſomething to you? Make uſe of this
" money till you are at Paris, where
" you will get a ſupply; and pray do
" not puniſh us for your want of pre-
" caution." At this ſhe ſighed, and,
' in ſpite of herſelf, let fall ſome tears.
" You are too amiable," cried ſhe,
' ſtruggling with her embarraſſment;
" your behaviour charms me, and
" heightens my friendſhip for you: but
" I muſt beg to be excuſed from tak-
" ing what you offer with ſuch a good
" grace."—" If it is indifferent to you
" to ſtay here alone," returned I, with
' a mortified air, " it will not be ſo to
" me, to be deprived of your company:
" it is a favour I preſumed to aſk of
" you; but, indeed, do not deſerve to
" obtain it."—" You not deſerve to
" obtain it!" cried ſhe. " Ah! how
" can one help admiring you? Well,
" Miſs, what ſhall I take? Since you
" threaten me with believing that I do
" not love you, I will do what you
" deſire, and follow you immediately."
' She then took one louis d'or: I in-
' ſiſted upon her taking two; and then
' we went up, rejoined our company,
' and ordered dinner to be brought in;
' which over, we ſtepped into the coach,
' and ſupped together in the ſame agree-
' able manner. The next day, when
' we were about a league from Paris,
' a coach met us; and an elderly gen-
' tleman in it aſked if we had not Mrs.
' Darciere with us: this was a perſon
' ſhe had wrote to, to deſire him to meet
' us, and provide us with a convenient
' lodging. But, as we could not con-
' veniently get at our portmanteau and
' boxes, we choſe not to alight till we
' came to the next village, about half a
' mile off, where the coachman told us
' he was to ſtop. While they were
' buſy in taking our baggage out of the
' boot, the unknown lady took me aſide
' to return the two louis d'ors I had
' forced her to borrow of me; but, as
' ſhe was not yet at Paris, ſhe could
' not prevail upon me to take them
' again; and I inſiſted that ſhe ſhould
' keep them to oblige her to tell me
' where ſhe lived. " I ſhould have
" been as ready to tell you that," re-
' turned ſhe, " if you had taken your
" money again. My name is Dar-
" neuil;" (this was only the name of
' a ſmall country ſeat of hers) " and
" you may hear of me at the Marquis
" De Viry's, in St. Lewis's Street,
" who is one of my friends. Tell
" me,

"me, now, in your turn," added ſhe, "where I ſhall find you?"—"Indeed, "Madam," ſaid I, "I cannot tell "that; but I will let you know it to-"morrow." Here I heard Mrs. Darciere call me, and immediately went to her; when we both took our leave of Mrs. Darneuil; and I embraced her at parting with the greateſt tenderneſs; and, in an hour's time, arrived at the houſe Mrs. Darciere's friend had provided for us.

'The next day, my companion and I went to find my mother, and ſet out in a coach to go to St. Honore's Street, oppoſite the Capuchin Friars, where I had been informed the marquis my father-in-law lived. Our coachman ſtopped at the abovementioned place, and aſked if the Marchioneſs De *** was at home. "She "has been gone from hence theſe two "years," ſaid a Swiſs who came to the door: "after the marquis's death, "his ſon ſold the houſe to my maſter, "who lives in it now."—"The mar-"quis dead!" cried I, with a mixture of trouble and ſurprize. I began to be in pain for my mother, which encreaſed upon a recollection that he ſaid her ſon was married: and, in fine, this news ſtruck me, as if it had been attended with a thouſand diſmal circumſtances, which I dreaded without knowing why. "Pray, "how long has he been dead?" replied I, in a voice quite changed. "Why, I think it is about ſeventeen "or eighteen months ſince," ſaid he: "he died about a month or ſix weeks "after he had married the marquis his "ſon, who lives at preſent in the Place "Royal."—"Does the marchioneſs "his mother live with him ſtill?" returned I. "No; I think I have "heard that ſhe does not," ſaid he: "but you need only go to his houſe, to "know where ſhe lives; it is likely "you may get ſome information there." —"Well," ſaid Mrs. Darciere, "let "us return home, then; we had better "defer going to the Place Royal till "after dinner."—"As you pleaſe, "Madam," replied I with a troubled and diſordered countenance: on which we returned home. In the afternoon we went to the Place Royal; but my misfortunes were not ſo ſoon to be at an end; neither my brother nor ſiſter-in-law were at home: their porter told us that they were gone to a country-ſeat that was fifteen or twenty leagues from Paris; that my mother did not live with them, and that he knew not where ſhe lodged; that ſhe had been there that very day, at about eleven in the morning, to ſee her ſon, whoſe abſence ſhe had not been acquainted with; that ſhe was much ſurprized and ſorry to find him gone; that ſhe ſaid ſhe was juſt come out of the country; and retired without leaving any directions. At this, my troubles increaſed, and I began to be extremely diſturbed. "You ſay ſhe "was ſorry to find him gone!" replied I. "Yes, Miſs," ſaid he: "I "thought ſo by her looks."—"But "how did ſhe come here to-day?" ſaid I, from a miſtruſt of her circumſtances, and in order to get ſome information from his anſwer. "Was "ſhe in her own coach, or in one of "her friends?"—"As to coaches," replied he, "ſhe has none: ſhe was "alone, and very much fatigued; for "ſhe reſted herſelf here above a quar-"ter of an hour."—"Alone! and "without a coach! The marquis's mo-"ther on foot! Oh, monſtrous!" cried I, in a ſtrange kind of amazement. "But do not you know any body "hereabouts," added I, "that can "tell me her lodgings?"—"No, "Miſs," ſaid he; "ſhe comes here "very ſeldom; and always at a time "when we have no company; and "makes her viſits ſo ſhort, that I do "not remember I have ever ſeen her "ſpeak to any body but the marquis "her ſon: ſhe always comes in a morn-"ing, and ſometimes even before he is "up." Could anything appear worſe, or give me a more frightful picture of my mother's wretched ſituation? "What ſhall we do, then? What re-"ſource have I left to find her?" cried I to Mrs. Darciere, who began now to have no good opinion of her circumſtances. "If we make a care-"ful enquiry, it will be impoſſible not "to find her," ſaid ſhe: "you have "not the leaſt reaſon to fear it." I made her no anſwer but a ſigh. It would have been now very convenient for us to have enquired after Mrs. Darneuil, being near the Marquis De Viry's: but my mother took up

all

'all my thoughts, which were employed about the dreadfulneſs of her 'condition, and the impoſſibility of 'ever tenderly embracing her. Mrs. 'Darciere endeavoured in vain to raiſe 'my hopes and diſſipate my alarms: 'that mother who came on foot to ſee 'her ſon, ſo weary that ſhe was obliged 'to reſt herſelf; that mother who made 'ſo poor a figure, and was ſo buried in 'oblivion, that even the ſervants of her 'ſon did not know where ſhe lived; 'perpetually returned upon my 'thoughts.

'From the Place Royal, we went 'to Mrs. Darciere's attorney, who 'was endeavouring to recover an eſtate 'for her, and whom we took into the 'coach to carry him to our lodgings, 'that he might take into his poſſeſſion 'ſome writings which he wanted. As 'he was mentioning in the way a per'ſon he was to ſee the next day, who 'lived in the Marſhes, which is near 'the place where I hoped to find my 'mother, I aſked him if he did not 'know her, without telling him that I 'was her daughter. "Yes," ſaid he, "I have ſeen her two or three times "before the marquis's death; but ſince "that time I do not know what is be"come of her; and have only heard "that ſhe is not very happy."—"Well, "Sir, but what ſituation is ſhe in?" 'cried I, with an emotion which I had 'the greateſt difficulty to conceal. "Her ſon is rich, and in a very ex"alted ſtation."—"That is true," 'returned he; "he has married the "daughter of the Duke De N———; "but I believe the marchioneſs is at "variance with him and her daughter"in-law. The marchioneſs, they ſay, "was the widow of a poor inſignificant "country-gentleman, of whom the de"ceaſed marquis became ſo enamour"ed, that, notwithſtanding his im"menſe riches, and high titles, he raſh"ly married her: but now he is dead, "and his ſon has given his hand to the "Duke De N———'s daughter, it is "eaſy to imagine that the young mar"chioneſs does not caſt a very favour"able eye upon ſuch a mother-in-law, "and is not over-fond of being allied "to all the petty ſquires and mean re"lations of her firſt huſband's family: "among whom they ſay there is a "daughter, that they have never ſeen; "and probably will have no great cu"rioſity ever to ſee. This is all that I "have heard on this ſubject."

'The tears flowed from my eyes all 'the time he was ſpeaking; and when 'he had done, I was unable to anſwer 'him: whilſt Mrs. Darciere obſerved 'my grief, and bluſhed to hear him talk 'thus. "Who do you call petty "ſquires, Sir?" ſaid ſhe, as ſoon as he 'had done. "The young marchio"neſs muſt be very ill informed, if, "though a duke's daughter, ſhe can "bluſh at the alliance you ſpeak of. "I, who am of the ſame part of the "country as her mother-in-law whom "ſhe ſo much deſpiſes, can tell her "that the marchioneſs, whoſe maiden "name was De Treſle, is of one of "the moſt noble and ancient families "in our province. I can tell her that "Mr. De Terviere, her firſt huſband, "could yield in theſe reſpects to none; "and that there is not a more ancient, "nor has been a family more conſide"rable by the extent of it's lands; and "that, decayed as it is now in theſe "reſpects, Mr. De Terviere might "have left above twenty thouſand li"vres a year to his widow, had not "his father diſinherited him, and made "his younger brother his heir: and, "in ſhort, that there is not any mar"quis or duke in France, who might "not, with honour, marry Miſs De "Terviere, that girl whom they have "ſo little curioſity to ſee at Paris, and "whom no lady here will ever excel, "either in the charms of her perſon, "her wit, or amiable character." The 'attorney then, obſerving my eyes 'moiſt, and probably recollecting that 'I was the perſon who enquired after 'the old marchioneſs, ſuſpected that I 'might probably be her daughter. "Madam," ſaid he, with ſome confu'ſion, to Mrs. Darciere, "though I "have only repeated what I have heard "from others, I am afraid I have been "guilty of an imprudence. Is not "this Miſs De Terviere herſelf?"— "Yes, Sir," returned ſhe, without 'the leaſt heſitation: "you are not "miſtaken; this is that little country "girl whom they probably imagine a "kind of peaſant; and whom, per"haps, they would be very happy if "they could reſemble."—"I do not "think any lady, though ever ſo "charming, would be a loſer by it," 'returned he, begging my pardon.

'Here

'Here our coach ſtopped, being at 'home; and I only anſwered him by a 'reſpectful bow.

'You will eaſily judge, Marianne, 'that, as ſoon as he was gone, I did 'not forget to thank Mrs. Darciere 'for that obliging indignation with 'which ſhe had defended the honour 'of our family. The attorney had 'confirmed me in the opinion I had 'entertained of my mother's ſituation: 'and the more I thought ſhe had rea-'ſon to complain, the more I was af-'flicted at not knowing where to find 'her. It is true, I did not know her; 'but this made me more ardently de-'ſire to ſee her. How great, how in-'tereſting an adventure, is it to find 'again an unknown mother! That 'very name carries in it ſomething in-'expreſſibly delightful! But what 'moſt contributed to awaken my ten-'derneſs for her, was to think that ſhe 'was deſpiſed, and in trouble: her 'afflictions made me ſympathize with 'her in her diſtreſs; while my affec-'tion for her transferred to myſelf 'thoſe affronts which I imagined ſhe 'endured; and, methought, I ſhould 'find an extreme pleaſure in letting 'her know how much I was affected 'by them. Poſſibly my deſire of ſee-'ing her would not have been ſo lively, 'if I had thought her happy; for then 'I could not have flattered myſelf with 'being ſo well received: but I was 'coming to her in circumſtances that 'inſured her affection; and was per-'ſuaded that her misfortunes would 'increaſe her tenderneſs for me, and 'make me find her a better mother.

'We ſought for her with the utmoſt 'care for ten or twelve days together, 'without being able to find where ſhe 'lived; when, tired at laſt with our 'fruitleſs enquiries, we went again to 'the Place Royal, in hopes that in this 'time ſhe had called there again; and, 'having heard that ſhe had been en-'quired for by two ladies, might have 'left directions where we might find 'her, in caſe we ſhould call again: 'but our ſearch was ſtill in vain; as 'ſhe had heard that the marquis would 'not return under three weeks or a 'month's time, ſhe probably did not 'intend to come again till that time 'was expired. But, in the midſt of 'my vexation upon this diſappoint-'ment, I happened to think that we 'were in the neighbourhood of our 'fellow-traveller, Mrs. Darneuil, 'whom I was to enquire of at the 'Marquis De Viry's. We went thi-'ther directly; and Mrs. Darciere's 'footman knocked at the door, but 'nobody came; he knocked harder a 'ſecond time; when, at laſt, an old 'man, with long white hair, came to 'the door; and, without aſking any 'queſtions, told us the marquis and 'his lady were both gone to Verſailles. '"They are not the perſons we want," 'ſaid I; "we come to ſee Mrs. Dar-"neuil."—"Oh, Mrs. Darneuil!" 'ſaid the old man; "ſhe does not live "here. But are you not juſt come "out of the country?" I anſwered, 'that we were. "Well, then," ſaid 'he, "be ſo good as to ſtay a little, "and you ſhall ſpeak with one of her "ſervants, who deſired me to let her "know when you came." On this 'he walked back with ſlow ſteps; and 'ſoon after the woman came up to the 'coach-door. "Can you tell us where "we may find Mrs. Darneuil?" ſaid 'I. "We thought we ſhould find her "here."—"No, ladies," ſaid ſhe; "ſhe does not live here.—But did not "you, Miſs, arrive with her at Paris, "and lend her ſome money a few "days ago?"—"Yes; I forced her "to take ſome," returned I; "and "ſhould be extremely glad to ſee her "again. Pray, where does ſhe live?" —"In the Fauxbourg St. Germain," 'replied ſhe; (this was the part of the 'town in which we lived:) "but I "have forgot the name of the ſtreet "ſhe lives in. However, ſhe ordered "me to enquire where you lodged," 'continued ſhe, "if you came to aſk "for her; and, at the ſame time, to "return you theſe two louis d'ors." 'I took them; and told her, if ſhe 'would learn the name of the ſtreet 'where ſhe lived, I would ſend to 'know it in a day or two's time. She 'promiſed that ſhe would; and then 'we left her.

'As we returned home, we obſerved 'a concourſe of people aſſembled at a 'houſe but two doors from our lodg-'ings: all the neighbours were at 'their windows, or their doors, as if 'ſome conſiderable accident had hap-'pened. This raiſed our curioſity; 'but, as were going to aſk the cauſe, 'we ſaw the gentlewoman who be-

'longed

" longed to our houſe making her way
" through the crowd with an air that
" ſhewed ſhe had ſome concern in the
" incident: ſhe was full of action,
" ſhrugged up her ſhoulders, and was
" followed by a little man, very meanly
" dreſſed, who was talking to her with
" his hat in his hand. As ſhe came
" in, we aſked her what was the mat-
" ter. " I will tell you in a moment,
" ladies," ſaid ſhe; " but muſt firſt
" finiſh a little buſineſs with this
" man:" and then went with him in-
" to another room. A few minutes
" after this, ſhe returned to us again.
" I have been witneſs to a ſcene," ſaid
" ſhe, " that has prodigiouſly affected
" me. As I was returning from vi-
" ſiting a lady who lives hard by, I
" obſerved a crowd about this man's
" door; he keeps an inn, and is my
" tenant. I went into the houſe im-
" mediately, to ſee what was the mat-
" ter; when I obſerved a woman of a
" genteel appearance, who ſeemed un-
" der the greateſt preſſure; ſhe looked
" as pale as if ſhe was going to ex-
" pire; the tears were ſtreaming from
" her eyes; and, though her counte-
" nance had all the marks of the ut-
" moſt grief and amazement, ſhe had
" ſtill a very noble and graceful air.
" This man and his daughter were
" railing at her, and endeavouring to
" force her to leave the houſe; while
" her tears were almoſt the only argu-
" ments ſhe could make uſe of to
" ſoften their hearts. The man di-
" rected his diſcourſe with great heat
" to every one that came in, as if he
" would appeal to them for the juſtice
" of his proceeding; and therefore re-
" peated his ſtory ſeveral times, but
" always with ſome additional cir-
" cumſtances. As I was concerned
" to ſee the gentlewoman treated with
" ſo little ceremony, I liſtened with
" the greateſt attention; and found
" that, about ten or twelve days ago,
" ſhe came to take a room in his houſe,
" with promiſes to let him have ſome
" money the next day; but failed in
" the performance. Two days after
" this, ſhe was taken very ill of a fe-
" ver; and the man, who did not know
" her, provided her with a ſurgeon
" and an apothecary; which, you
" know, muſt put her to a neceſſary
" expence; he even ſupplied her with
" every thing proper for a ſick perſon:
" but the man, who is far from being
" rich, finding ſhe was a little better
" to-day, and being applied to by the
" ſurgeon who had let her blood, and
" the apothecary who furniſhed her
" with medicines, who were deſirous
" of being paid immediately by him,
" ſince he was the perſon who had ſent
" for them, as they had both applied
" to her for that purpoſe without re-
" ceiving any ſatisfaction, the poor
" man was frighted to find that ſhe
" had no money; and, not only afraid
" of loſing what ſhe owed him, but
" what he might farther advance, re-
" ſolved to make her leave his houſe.
" He had no ſooner taken this reſolu-
" tion, than there arrived a pedlar, who
" travelled the country, and commonly
" lodged at his houſe when in town.
" All his rooms were full; and there
" was only this woman's, which he
" now looked upon as empty, ſince ſhe
" had given him no money. Upon
" this he went up to her, and deſired
" her to provide for herſelf, and not
" to hinder him from letting the cham-
" ber to one who was able to pay him;
" told her ſhe already owed him a great
" deal; that he did not deſire her to
" pay him now, but only to leave him
" ſomething for his ſecurity. At this
" the poor gentlewoman, (for I can
" hardly help calling her ſo, notwith-
" ſtanding her dreadful circumſtances)
" who was ſtill too weak to be removed
" ſo ſuddenly, entreated him to let her
" ſtay a few days; told him that he
" had no reaſon to make himſelf un-
" eaſy; and that ſhe would not only
" pay him very ſoon, but reward him
" for his care of her; and that, in a
" week's time at fartheſt, ſhe would
" ſend him with a letter to a perſon,
" from whom he would not return
" without a ſum of money. She
" begged him to have patience; and
" ſaid that ſhe had no pledge to leave
" but ſome linen and cloaths, which
" would be of no value to him, though
" they were abſolutely neceſſary to
" her; and that, if he knew her, he
" would be convinced that ſhe would
" not deceive him. But he would not
" be prevailed upon; he had already
" forced her out of her room; locked
" up her box, which he was reſolved
" to keep: and thus the diſpute was
" continued in the hall, where the man
" and his daughter were railing at the

" poor gentlewoman, who could not " think of going. I ſaw her conſter- " nation and ſhame; which were greater " than can be imagined. At laſt, ſhe " caſt her eyes upon me, and immedi- " ately took me aſide—" Dear Ma- " dam," cried ſhe, drying her eyes, ' and endeavouring to ſuppreſs and ' keep down ſome riſing ſighs, " for " Heaven's ſake, if you have any aſ- " cendancy over this man, prevail up- " on him to grant me this ſhort delay! " I give you my word he ſhall be paid." " This was ſpoke with an air which " penetrated my heart, raiſed my pity, " and even filled me with reſpect. The " whole debt was only ten crowns: " If I loſe it," ſaid I to myſelf, " it " will not ruin me." On this, I told " the landlord that I would pay him. " I deſired her to return to her room: " her box was reſtored to her; and " I brought the man with me to pay " him at my houſe. This, ladies, " is the ſtory; which I have related as " minutely as poſſible. It has made " ſuch an impreſſion upon my mind, " that I never could have been one " moment pleaſed with myſelf if I had " not advanced the money."

' Mrs. Darciere and I were ſenſibly ' affected at this recital: we gave the ' relater thoſe praiſes which her great ' humanity required; and reſolved to ' follow her example, by endeavouring ' to relieve this diſtreſſed perſon from ' her troubles. " Though the maſter " of the inn is appeaſed," ſaid we, " the gentlewoman has no money; and " may therefore be neglected. Be ſo " good, Madam, as to give her, from " us, this ſmall ſum."—" With all my " heart!" replied ſhe; " ſhe ſhall have " it this minute:" and immediately ' left us. When ſhe returned, ſhe told ' us ſhe left the gentlewoman in bed, ' much diſordered by this unhappy ad- ' venture; that ſhe could not receive ' the ten crowns we had ſent, without ' bluſhing; and that ſhe begged us to ' conſider it only as lent to her, which ' would increaſe the obligation, and ' render her gratitude more worthy of ' herſelf and us. This compliment ' was ſo far from diſpleaſing us, that ' it confirmed the high opinion we had ' entertained of her; and we were ſo ' much prejudiced in her favour, that ' I wonder we did not make her a viſit. ' It is certain that I thought of pro- ' poſing it to Mrs. Darciere; who has ' told me ſince, that ſhe alſo was in- ' clined to propoſe it to me. The diſ- ' mal circumſtances of this unknown ' perſon made me reflect on thoſe of ' my mother, though I could not think ' there was the leaſt reſemblance be- ' tween them; for I imagined that, ' though hers were not ſplendid, yet ' they were, at leaſt, ſuch as would be ' comfortable to any woman of a much ' inferior rank; though they might not ' poſſibly be ſo to her.

' Two or three days after this, as ' Mrs. Darciere and I were returning ' from church, I thought I ſaw, at a ' ſmall diſtance from us, the ſervant I ' ſpoke to at the Marquis De Viry's: ' I had promiſed to ſend to her, to know ' where Mrs. Darneuil lived; which ' I did the day after, but ſhe was gone ' out; ſo that I was glad to ſee her; ' and pointed her out to Mrs. Dar- ' ciere, who knew her as well as I. ' This woman, who ſaw us at a diſ- ' tance, ſeemed to know us too, and ' ſtood at our neighbour the innkeeper's ' door. When we came up to her, we ' bid the coachman ſtop. " I am very " glad to ſee you again," ſaid I: " I " fancy you have been to ſee Mrs. " Darneuil, or elſe are come from her? " Will not you tell us where ſhe lives?" —" If you will be ſo good as to ſtay " till I ſpeak to a lady who lodges " here," ſaid ſhe, " I will come back " and give you an anſwer in a mo- " ment."—" A lady!" replied Mrs. ' Darciere, with great aſtoniſhment; ' (for we had been informed that the ' unfortunate unknown woman was the ' only one of our ſex that lodged in ' this houſe.) " Who can ſhe be, " pray?" added ſhe. Then turning ' to me—" Poſſibly the lady ſhe ſpeaks " of is the perſon who had that ſad ad- " venture the other day!"—" It is the " ſame," replied the chambermaid, ' without giving me time to anſwer: " ſhe was not born to receive ſuch " groſs affronts."—" If you are will- " ing," ſaid Mrs. Darciere to me, " we will pay her a viſit."—" You " may, ladies," replied the ſervant, " provided you will let me go firſt, " that ſhe may be apprized of your " coming; perhaps ſhe may deſire you " to ſpare her confuſion."—" No, no," ' ſaid Mrs. Darciere; " we are not " afraid of diſpleaſing her: ſhe has

" heard

" heard of us already. You may go;
" and we will follow you." We
' alighted directly, and waited in the
' paſſage to her chamber while ſhe went
' in. As ſhe left the door upon the
' jar, we could ſee her ſitting up in her
' bed with a ſupine, languid air. On
' a ſudden the tears guſhed from her
' eyes, and ſhe wrung her hands; when
' Mrs. Darciere cried out—" Hea-
" vens, child! it is Mrs. Darneuil!"
' I then heard her ſigh, and ſaw her
' eyes fixed upon me with a languiſh-
' ing, mortified, and tender look.
' Moved at this dreadful and unex-
' pected ſight, I ran to embrace her
' with ſuch a ſudden vivacity, that I
' held her for ſome time in my arms
' without her being able to ſpeak a
' word, whilſt the tears inceſſantly
' ſtreamed from her eyes. At laſt,
' when her firſt emotions, mixed, with-
' out doubt, with humility and confi-
' dence, were over—" I had doomed
" myſelf to ſee you no more," ſaid ſhe
' with a ſigh; " but never did any re-
" ſolution coſt me ſo dear!" I re-
' doubled my careſſes at this diſcourſe.
" How unaccountable was that reſo-
" lution!" ſaid I, taking hold of one
' of her hands, whilſt ſhe gave the
' other to Mrs. Darciere: " how lit-
" tle did you know us! What mon-
" ſters did you take us for? Alas!
" who is the perſon that is not ſub-
" ject to the various unavoidable miſ-
" fortunes of life? How could you
" think that we could ever forget the
" reſpect we owe you? or that any
" circumſtances of life could ever ren-
" der you leſs dear to us, or leſs wor-
" thy of our friendſhip?" Mrs. Dar-
' ciere entertained her with pretty near
' the ſame diſcourſe; while every look
' ſhe gave us was a ſufficient proof that
' ſhe was out of her ſphere. The
' chambermaid, all this while, ſtood at
' ſome diſtance from us, with the tears
' in her eyes; and I could not help
' blaming her for not acquainting us,
' the firſt time ſhe ſaw us, with this
' lady's unhappy ſituation. " I would
" have done it with all my heart,"
' ſaid ſhe; " but I could not diſpenſe
" with this lady's order to the con-
" trary. I have been ſeventeen years
" in her ſervice: it was ſhe that placed
" me with the Marchioneſs De Viry;
" and I ſhall always look upon her as
" my miſtreſs, and think myſelf oblig-
" ed to obey her in whatever ſhe com-
" mands me."—" Do not chide her,"
' ſaid my ſick friend; " I ſhall never
" forget her kindneſs. Could you
" believe that ſhe ſhould generouſly
" offer me, of her own accord, all the
" money ſhe had in the world? while
" five or ſix perſons of the greateſt diſ-
" tinction, with whom I have lived in
" the ſtricteſt friendſhip, have refuſed
" to lend me a trifling ſum, that would
" have ſaved me from the dreadful
" ſtreights to which I have been re-
" duced, and have ſhamefully put me
" off with empty words and an inſipid
" affectation of politeneſs! It is true,
" I did not take her money; yours ſea-
" ſonably prevented me. The gentle-
" woman with whom you lodge has
" reſcued me from the moſt cutting
" part of my troubles; and I ſhall ac-
" quit myſelf, in a few days, of all
" theſe debts: but my gratitude will
" be eternal."

' Scarce had ſhe uttered theſe words,
' when Mrs. Darciere's footman came
' to tell her that her attorney waited for
' her at the door, to give her an anſwer
' about an affair that would not admit
' of the leaſt delay. " I know what it
" is," ſaid ſhe; " he has but one word
" to ſay to me: I will go and ſpeak to
" him; and ſhall be back again imme-
" diately.—Pray, Madam," ſaid ſhe,
' addreſſing herſelf to Mrs. Darneuil,
" think no more of what is paſſed; be
" eaſy as to your preſent condition,
" and only think how to render us of
" ſervice to you: your ſituation ought
" to give a concern to every virtuous
" mind; and, indeed, we are too hap-
" py when we have an opportunity of
" ſerving thoſe who are like you."
' The ſick lady only thanked her by
' ſqueezing her hand, and a look inex-
' preſſibly tender. " I think myſelf
" happy," ſaid ſhe, as ſoon as ſhe was
' gone, " in the midſt of my misfor-
" tunes, when I conſider who it is that
" gives me relief; that it is neither my
" friends, my relations, thoſe with
" whom I have paſſed a great part of
" my life; nor even my children, who
" fly from me, and abandon me.
" Doubtleſs I ſhould have periſhed in
" the moſt wretched manner, in the
" midſt of all theſe reſources, if it had
" not been for you, Miſs; to whom I
" am unknown, who owe me nothing,
" and who, with the moſt engaging

" ſenſibility, and in the moſt amiable " manner, at once are inſtead of friends, " relations, and children. Had it not " been for you and your companion, " whom I found with you in the " coach; had it not been for this girl, " (ſuffer me to mention her with you; " for her zeal and affection render her " worthy of the honour I do her;) in " ſhort, had it not been for the lady " with whom you lodge, to whom I " am an entire ſtranger, and who could " not ſee my diſtreſs without being " moved with compaſſion; I ſhould " have died in the greateſt want, and " in an aſtoniſhing obſcurity! Aſto- " niſhing, indeed, for one of my rank! " Lord, what is life! what the miſe- " ries with which it is attended!"— " Dear Madam!" cried I, extremely ' touched, " begin to forget theſe ter- " rible ſcenes; let me ſecond Mrs. " Darciere's entreaties to prevail upon " you to loſe the proſpect of theſe " frightful, painful events. Give us " the pleaſure of ſeeing you full of " tranquillity, that you may diſſipate " the uneaſineſs you have occaſioned " in our minds."—" Well, then, I " have done," ſaid ſhe; " you are in " the right; for there is no adverſity, " no calamity, which ſuch engaging " goodneſs ought not entirely to re- " move. Let us talk, then, Miſs, of " your concerns. Where is that mo- " ther you came to meet again, after " an abſence of ſo many years? How " did ſhe receive you? How tenderly " ſhe ought to love you! How happy " muſt ſhe think herſelf in having ſuch " a daughter! Heaven, indeed, has " given me one; but I have not the " leaſt reaſon to complain of her; far " from it!" She could not pronounce ' theſe laſt words without the utmoſt ' concern and emotion. " Alas, Ma- " dam!" returned I, ſighing too, " you " talk of the tenderneſs of my mother; " but I durſt not flatter myſelf with " the thoughts of having any ſhare in " her affection; and ſhall think my- " ſelf very happy if ſhe is not ſorry to " ſee me, though it is twenty years " ſince I was with her. But, pray, " let us return to yourſelf again: you " have here but very ill attendance; " you want a nurſe; and I will order " the maſter of the houſe, when I leave " you, to provide you with one before " night."

' I thought ſhe was going to anſwer ' me, but was aſtoniſhed to ſee her ſud- ' denly burſt into tears; then recol- ' lecting the number of years which I ' had paſſed remote from my mother— " Twenty years!" cried ſhe, with a ' penſive and dejected countenance, "I " cannot hear of this without the ut- " moſt grief. Juſt Heaven! What " reaſon has your mother to reproach " herſelf, as well as I! Oh, Miſs! tell " me," added ſhe, without giving me ' time for reflection, " why ſhe neglect- " ed you to ſuch a degree?"—" I was," ' replied I, " but two years old when " ſhe married a ſecond huſband; and a " few weeks after went to Paris, where " ſhe had a ſon, who, without doubt, " effaced every idea of me from her " heart. Since ſhe has been gone, I " have had no friend near her to awake " her tenderneſs for me, by putting her " in mind that ſhe had a daughter. I " have never received above three or " four letters from her in my life; and " am juſt come from an aunt who " is lately dead, with whom I have " lived ſix or ſeven years, without ever " receiving any news of my mother, " to whom I have wrote ſeveral times " to no purpoſe. I have ſought for her " here according to the laſt direction I " had received; but in vain: my fa- " ther-in-law is dead; his ſon is mar- " ried, and is now in the country with " the marchioneſs his wife; but nobody " can tell me where to find my mother, " who does not live with him. So that, " notwithſtanding a thouſand enqui- " ries, I am ſtill as much in the dark " with reſpect to her as ever. But " what alarms me moſt, and fills me " with a mortal inquietude, is the ap- " prehenſion that ſhe is in indigent cir- " cumſtances; for I have heard that her " ſon, whom ſhe has been ſo extrava- " gantly fond of, has made himſelf un- " worthy of her tenderneſs, by uſing " her unkindly."

' I could not conclude this diſcourſe ' without ſhedding tears; but the un- ' known lady, the fictitious Mrs. Dar- ' neuil, who had been weeping before, ' had her eyes eagerly fixed upon mine ' whilſt I was ſpeaking, and ſeemed to ' reſtrain her tears to hear me with the ' greater attention: her looks were wild, ' and expreſſive of the utmoſt inquie- ' tude, and ſhe ſeemed to be full of the ' moſt violent agitation. When I had ' done,

'done, ſhe made me no anſwer; ſhe 'was ſtunned and ſpeechleſs; the air 'of her countenance expreſſed the 'greateſt emotion: I participated in 'the trouble which I ſaw painted there; 'and ſeemed to anticipate the diſcovery 'of a ſurprizing event. We beheld 'each other without either of us being 'able to break this profound ſilence; 'till at laſt ſhe ſpoke, and, with a trem-'bling voice, ſaid—" I believe, Miſs, "your mother is not unknown to me: "pray where does that ſon live of whom "you enquired for her?"—" At the "Place Royal," replied I, with a voice 'as much altered as her's. " And his "name?" added ſhe with precipitation, 'as if her breath had been exhauſted. "The Marquis De ***," returned I, 'trembling. " Oh, my dear Ter-"viere!" cried ſhe aloud, ſinking into 'my arms. At this exclamation, 'which immediately informed me of 'her being my mother, I gave a loud 'ſhriek, which frightened Mrs. Dar-'ciere, who had juſt left her attorney, 'and was coming up ſtairs. Uncertain 'what might be the cauſe of my crying 'out in an inn like this, which could 'be ſuppoſed to harbour none but per-'ſons of a mean rank, ſhe cried out too, 'to make the people come up and give 'me ſome aſſiſtance in caſe of need. 'The landlord and his daughter came 'running to her, followed by her foot-'man, frighted at the noiſe ſhe made, 'and aſked the cauſe of it. " Follow "me! follow me!" cried ſhe haſtily; "I have juſt heard a ſhriek from the "room of your ſick lodger, with whom "I left the young lady I brought with "me; let us at all hazards go in to-"gether." When they entered the 'chamber, they found me ſpeechleſs, 'weak, pale, and in a kind of ſtupidity, 'in which I was weeping through the 'different emotions of joy, ſurprize, 'and grief. My mother was fainted 'away, and had given no ſigns of 'knowledge ſince I held her in my 'arms; while the chambermaid, whom 'I was unable to aſſiſt, was uſing her 'utmoſt endeavours to bring her to 'herſelf. " What is the matter?" 'cried Mrs. Darciere as ſhe came in; "What ails you, Miſs?" I could give 'her no other anſwer, but my ſighs and 'tears; and then lifting up my hand, 'I ſhewed her my mother, as if this 'geſture had been ſufficient to inform 'her who that dear perſon was. "What "is all this?" added ſhe: "is ſhe dy-"ing?"—" No, Madam," replied the 'chambermaid; " but ſhe has juſt "known her daughter again, and faint-"ed away immediately."—" Yes," 'ſaid I then, endeavouring to recover 'myſelf, "it is my mother!"—" Your "mother!" cried ſhe, haſtening to her 'to afford her ſome aſſiſtance: "what, "the Marchioneſs De ***? What a "ſtrange adventure!"—" A marchio-"neſs!" ſaid the innkeeper, joining 'his hands together with amazement; "Oh, the dear lady! Had ſhe told me "her quality, I durſt not have given "her the leaſt pain." However, their 'endeavours inſenſibly recovered her 'ſpirits; and ſhe at laſt opened her eyes. 'But I ſhall paſs over in ſilence our 'mutual careſſes, and tender endear-'ments. The affecting circumſtances 'in which I found her again; the no-'velty and ſurprizing manner of our 'acquaintance and friendſhip; the plea-'ſure I found in ſeeing her, and calling 'her mother; the long time that ſhe 'had forgot her duty to me; all the 'hardſhips ſhe had made me ſuffer; 'and that kind of revenge I took on 'her heart, by the tenderneſs of mine; 'all contributed to render her more 'dear to me, than, perhaps, ſhe would 'have been had I always lived with 'her. " Ah, my Terviere! Ah, my "daughter!" cried ſhe, " how guilty "thy tranſports render me!" But this 'ſudden flood of joy at our unexpect-'ed meeting ſoon coſt us very dear; 'for whether the violence of the emo-'tions ſhe had experienced, had cauſed 'a too great revolution in her mind, or 'that her fever, joined to her ſorrow, 'had weakened her too much, a few 'days after this ſhe was ſeized with a 'palſy on her right-ſide, which ſoon 'removed to the other. I was ex-'tremely afflicted at her melancholy 'condition, and ſhould have been quite 'inconſolable, if they had not flattered 'me with the hopes that ſhe would ſoon 'recover; but, however, they were 'miſtaken. When our tranſports be-'gan a little to abate, I propoſed to re-'move her to our houſe; but her fever, 'which was grown more violent, toge-'ther with her extreme weakneſs, 'would not permit it; and a phyſician 'I ſent for was abſolutely againſt it. So 'that I then only thought of lodging

'with

with her, that I might never be obliged to leave her; but the landlord aſſured me that his houſe was already full. "I will then, mother," ſaid I, "have a bed made by your's."—"No," returned ſhe, "that is impoſſible: the "room is already much too ſmall; and "I would not have you think of it. "Preſerve your health, my dear, for "my ſake; you would find but little "repoſe here; and your ill accommodation would be an additional uneaſineſs to me. You live very near; I ſhall have the conſolation of ſeeing "you as often as you pleaſe; and a "nurſe will be ſufficient to attend me." But I did not know how to leave her in this wretched lodging, and therefore begged, in the moſt affectionate manner, that ſhe would permit me to ſtay with her; but ſhe would not liſten to my entreaties. Mrs. Darciere was of her opinion; and it was reſolved, in ſpite of my inclination to the contrary, that I ſhould be ſatisfied with coming to ſee her, till ſhe was well enough to be removed ſomewhere elſe. I therefore went to her room every day as ſoon as I was up, and ſtayed with her till night.

As I was very deſirous of knowing the cauſe of her being reduced to ſuch dreadful circumſtances, I deſired her, the day after we came to the knowledge of each other, to give me an inſight into this ſurprizing part of her hiſtory; which ſhe very readily conſented to.

"I lived happily," ſaid ſhe, "with "the marquis my huſband for near "twenty years, which paſſed on in an "almoſt uninterrupted tranquillity. "My ſon was the object of our fondeſt love; a love which was attended "with ſuch an exceſſive weakneſs, as "to prompt us to indulge him in his "moſt unbounded deſires: we gave him "no reſtraint; entirely neglected the "improvement of his mind, and ſuffered him to imbibe all the ſilly prejudices of vanity and folly. When "he was about nineteen, the marquis "his father, who wiſhed to ſee him "married before he died, deſired me to "ſpeak to the Duke De N——— for "his daughter: I did ſo with joy; the "duke was pleaſed with the match; "readily accepted my propoſal; and a "fortnight after our young couple "were married. But while our joy "was at the height, the marquis was "ſeized with a complication of diſtempers, which in about ſix weeks time "carried him off. I was left in very "eaſy and comfortable circumſtances; "and, had I not been blinded by my "tenderneſs for my ſon, I had never "known the miſeries I have ſince ſuffered; which, indeed, have been a juſt "puniſhment for my guilty neglect of "thee. Infatuated with my affection "for this idol of my thoughts, I had "the imprudence to renounce all my "rights, and to reſerve to myſelf only "a very moderate penſion; which I "voluntarily conſented to, as he obliged himſelf to have me with him in "his houſe, and defray all my expences. I was received very politely; "and the firſt month paſſed without "having any reaſon to complain of "their behaviour, though it could not "be much extolled. I was treated in "ſuch a cold, though civil manner, as "the heart is never ſatisfied with, and "which we know not how to explain, "would we make people ſenſible of "the defects of it. But now my ſon "began to treat me with neglect. My "daughter in-law, who was of a proud "and haughty temper, chanced one "day to ſee ſome gentlemen of our "province, who came very indifferently dreſſed to pay me a viſit: on this "ſhe imagined I muſt be greatly inferior to the marquis, who had done "me the honour to marry me; and upon this redoubled her coldneſs for "me; gradually ſuppreſſed thoſe little "regards which ſhe had hitherto never "neglected; and at laſt ſhewed me ſo "little reſpect, that her behaviour became quite intolerable; and I reſolved "to let her know it. "I can diſpenſe "with that duty you owe me as the "marquis's mother," ſaid I one day to "her: "be as undutiful to me as you "pleaſe; your honour is more concerned in it than mine; and I ſhall "leave it to the publick to do me juſtice; but I will never ſuffer you to "treat me with leſs politeneſs than you "dare to do your equals."—"I forget "politeneſs to you, Madam!" replied "ſhe, turning her back upon me to go "to her cloſet: "truly, this is a terrible "reproach; and I ſhould certainly be "in deſpair if I deſerved it. As to "the reſpect which is due to you, I "hope the publick you threaten me with

"will

" will not be altogether ſo very diffi-
" cult in that point as yourſelf!" Ex-
" aſperated at this inſolent reply, I
" complained of it to my ſon; but had
" not any reaſon to be better ſatisfied
" with him than I was with his wife.
" He laughed at our quarrel; ſaid it
" was a mere womaniſh debate, which
" we ſhould both forget the next day,
" and was what he ought not to med-
" dle with. He had frequently heard
" her make merry with the petty no-
" bility of our province, without be-
" ing offended; and ridiculouſly pleaſed
" with the juſtice ſhe did his father's
" extraction, he readily gave up mine
" to her pleaſantry: perhaps, he de-
" ſpiſed it himſelf, and did not think
" it any honour to him. What extra-
" vagant conceit! What wild ideas
" may not enter the head of a young
" man, whoſe mind is barren and un-
" cultivated! What weakneſs and folly
" is not ſuch a perſon capable of!
" Thus, forſaken by my ſon, and
" ſcorned by my daughter-in-law, who
" always treated me with contempt and
" inſolence, I became the laughing-
" ſtock of the family; and was ſoon
" treated with a diſreſpectful neglect
" by the very ſervants. On this I re-
" ſolved to leave the houſe; which I
" accordingly did one morning when
" my ſon was gone a hunting, leaving
" a letter behind me, in which I in-
" formed him of my reaſons for retir-
" ing, and at the ſame time deſiring
" him to pay me two quarters of my
" penſion, which was become due, and
" of which I had not yet received any
" thing; and alſo to ſend me thoſe
" goods I had reſerved for myſelf.
" The next day he came to ſee me; in
" which he endeavoured to perſuade
" me to return, by ſaying, that my
" leaving him was only the effect of an
" ill-humour which had no founda-
" tion; all the grievances mentioned
" in my letter, he treated as mere tri-
" fles that did not deſerve my notice;
" and told me that I ought not to make
" myſelf appear the moſt proud and
" opinionated woman, whom it was im-
" poſſible to live with; with many other
" arguments as little adapted to per-
" ſuade. The reſult of this viſit was,
" that he promiſed to ſend me the mo-
" ney I wanted, with all the goods
" which belonged to me; which, how-
" ever, were changed for ſuch as were
" of ſmall value, and were almoſt of
" no ſervice to me; when a little after
" I was obliged to ſell them for my
" ſubſiſtence. I received but the third
" part of the ſum which was become
" due; and my penſion continued to be
" ſo ill paid, that I was obliged to part
" with this faithful ſervant, leave my
" apartment, and paſs from one ready-
" furniſhed lodging to another, accord-
" ing to my want of ability to ſatisfy
" the demands of the perſons of whom
" I hired them. I was in this ſitua-
" tion, when the widow of an officer,
" for whom I had done an important
" piece of ſervice, offered to take me,
" for ſome months, to her country-
" ſeat: there I fell ſick; and, notwith-
" ſtanding the kind aſſiſtance of this
" lady, who was more generous than
" rich, I ſpent almoſt all the money I
" had brought with me. When I was
" a little recovered, I reſolved to re-
" turn to Paris, to ſee my ſon, with a
" reſolution to have recourſe to the
" law, if his inhumanity ſhould oblige
" me to it. The widow's country-
" ſeat was but about half a mile from
" the place where the ſtage-coach uſed
" to ſtop. I walked thither; and
" there I found Mrs. Darciere and
" thee. Happy meeting! There I be-
" gan to feel a friendſhip for thee,
" which owed it's riſe to thy merit; a
" friendſhip ſo ſoft, as made me wiſh
" we had been allied by the ties of
" blood, and which was, perhaps, in-
" ſpired by ſome ſecret ſympathy.
" What reaſon have I to reproach my-
" ſelf for my barbarity to thee! How
" unkind a mother, and how tender a
" child! As I was loth to give you the
" pain of ſeeing a woman of quality
" in diſtreſs, I changed my name, and
" took another that hindered thee from
" knowing me. This, my dear, is all
" that is neceſſary for me to tell you."

' I could not help being ſhocked, my
' dear Marianne, at my brother's in-
' gratitude. About eight days after
' this, Mrs. Darciere and I reſolved to
' pay him a viſit; and, that we might
' not miſs him, we took care to be at
' his houſe between one and two: but
' we were not deſtined to find him ſo
' ſoon; the marchioneſs was come to
' town without him, and did not ex-
' pect him till the next day. How-
' ever, we reſolved to ſee her, and im-
' mediately went up, after having ſent

' a ſervant

'a ſervant to tell her that Miſs De 'Terviere and another lady were coming up ſtairs; when we heard her ſay 'that ſhe did not know us. We found 'a pretty numerous company with her, 'who probably were to ſtay dinner. 'She advanced towards me, as I entered the room, with an air that ſeemed to ſay—" What would ſhe have " with me?" whilſt I was not at all 'dazzled with the rank ſhe bore at Paris and at court; nor by her titles, or 'the grandeur of her houſe, as I only looked upon her as my ſiſter-in-law. 'As I had ſent up my name, which I 'fancied ſhe had at leaſt heard of, ſince 'it had been that of her mother-in-law, I went to her in a free but polite manner to embrace her; when I 'obſerved that ſhe heſitated, as if in 'doubt whether ſhe ought to ſuffer me 'to take that liberty: however, ſhe 'could not refuſe returning my politeneſs, though ſhe did it with a viſible 'conſtraint and a remarkable air of indifference. We are nicely ſenſible, 'my dear Marianne, of this ſort of behaviour; for our own pride ſufficiently acquaints us with that of others. " Madam," ſaid I, " I judge, from " the ſurprize you ſeem to be in, that " my name was not faithfully brought " in to you; you cannot be a ſtranger " to it: I am called Terviere." She 'continued to look at me without making me any reply; and this I took to 'be another of her haughty airs; when 'I added, at laſt—" I am the mar-" quis's ſiſter!"—" I am very ſorry, " Miſs, he is not here," replied ſhe, 'deſiring us to ſit down; " he will not " be in town theſe two days."—" I " was told ſo, Madam," returned I: " but my viſit is not to him alone; I " came alſo to have the honour of ſeeing you." It was not without the 'greateſt reluctance that I made her 'this compliment; but we muſt ſometimes be civil for our own ſakes; 'though very often thoſe we ſpeak to 'do not deſerve we ſhould be ſo for 'theirs. " Beſides," continued I, " I am come about an affair that will " not admit of delay, and which highly " concerns my brother and myſelf, and " even you too, ſince it relates to my " mother."—" She does not uſually " addreſs herſelf to me about her affairs," replied ſhe, ſmiling; " and " I believe, Miſs, you had better ſtay " till the marquis's return." Her indifference on this ſubject made me 'angry; and as I obſerved the com-'pany ſeemed curious of hearing the 'ſequel of our converſation, I immediately reſolved to puniſh the marchioneſs for her little concern for my 'mother, by entering into particulars 'which could not be very agreeable to 'her. " Madam," ſaid I, " my " mother's affairs are very plain, and " eaſily underſtood: ſhe only aſks for " money, and you are ſenſible that ſhe " cannot do without."—" I have juſt " told you," cried ſhe, turning away 'her head, " that you muſt talk about " it to the marquis, for I never meddle " with their agreement upon that ſub-" ject."—" But, Madam," reſumed 'I, turning away my head as well as 'ſhe, " this agreement conſiſts only in " acquitting a penſion, the payment of " which has been neglected for almoſt " a year paſt; and you may, without " the leaſt inconvenience, intereſt your-" ſelf in the troubles of a mother-in-" law who has loved you to ſuch a de-" gree as to conſent to give you all ſhe " was poſſeſſed of."—" I have been told " that ſhe received from the late mar-" quis all ſhe ever gave you," replied 'ſhe, with a ſneer; " and I cannot " think myſelf obliged to thank your " mother for her ſon's being his fa-" ther's heir."—" Let me put you in " mind, Madam, that that mother is " now alſo called yours as well as " mine," returned I: " you ſpeak of " her as a ſtranger, or a perſon to whom " you are ſorry for being related."—" Who told you I was ſorry for it, " Miſs?" ſaid ſhe. " What good " would that do me? Would my ſorrow make her the leſs my mother-" in-law? I know ſhe is ſo, ſince the " marquis has been pleaſed to make " her the mother of his ſon." —" Sure, Madam, you have not well " conſidered what you are ſaying!" 'replied I, looking upon her with a 'kind of pity. " What do you mean " by reproaching the old marquis with " marrying my mother? If he had " not, I preſume, his ſon would never " have exiſted, and therefore could not " have been now your huſband. Is " he dear to you; and can you wiſh he " had never been born? But I believe " you only wiſh his mother had been " of a more noble family than ſhe is.

" If

" If this is the caſe, you have no rea-
" ſon to diſturb yourſelf; your pride
" need not be alarmed; for though
" the marquis was ſuperior to her in
" fortune, he was not in birth; and
" therefore did not diſhonour himſelf
" in marrying her: and this the whole
" province will tell you; I am ſur-
" prized that my brother has not let
" you know it. Therefore, Ma-
" dam," added I, without giving her
' time to reply, " you may ſafely, and
" without bluſhing, own her for your
" mother-in-law: nor need you be a-
" ſhamed of paying her all that duty
" which is due from a daughter, which,
" I am ſorry to ſay, you have hitherto
" refuſed her. Repair the injuſtice of
" your former diſdain, which muſt have
" diſpleaſed every witneſs of it; and
" which, indeed, would have been very
" unjuſt, had ſhe been of much meaner
" extraction than you have imagined:
" entertain, with regard to her, ſenti-
" ments worthy of yourſelf, of your
" education, and good diſpoſition; and
" make a proper return for the extra-
" ordinary teſtimonies ſhe has given
" you of her tenderneſs, by that con-
" fidence with which ſhe has relied
" upon you and her ſon for all the
" ſupport and happineſs of her re-
" maining life."— ' Truly, you would
" make excellent ſermons!" cried ſhe,
' riſing, with an air which ſhe ſtrove to
' render careleſs and unconcerned:
" I would freely liſten till the conclu-
" ſion of it; but we have been juſt
" told that dinner is ready. Do you
" dine with us, ladies?"—" No, Ma-
" dam, I give you thanks," replied I,
' riſing too with an air of indignation:
" I have but one word to add to what
" you call my ſermon. My mother,
" who has reſerved nothing to herſelf,
" and whom you both have abandon-
" ed to the moſt frightful extremities;
" who has been forced to ſell the piti-
" ful goods you ſent her in the room
" of thoſe ſhe had reſerved to herſelf;
" in ſhort, that mother who could not
" believe that either you or her ſon
" would ever want gratitude; who
" has conſented to give up a very hand-
" ſome ſettlement in conſideration of a
" very ſmall penſion you were to pay
" her, through the too-favourable
" opinion ſhe had entertained of his
" heart and yours; ſhe whom you in-
" vited to live with you at your houſe,
" to be loved, ſerved, and reſpected
" there, as ſhe deſerved; whom, on
" the contrary, you have treated with
" ſcorn and inſult, and abuſed to ſuch
" a degree as to force her to leave
" you, and to live on a ſmall penſion,
" which you have neglected to pay
" her, and which was too trifling for
" her ever to look upon as a reſource,
" though it is now the only one that
" is left her; that unfortunate mother-
" in-law, whoſe intereſt gives you ſo
" little concern—I now come to tell
" you was a few days ago in the ut-
" moſt diſtreſs, and was ſo dreadfully
" reduced as not to know where to ap-
" ply for ſhelter and bare ſubſiſtence.
" She is ſick; and lodges at a mean
" inn, where ſhe has only a ſmall,
" dark room; which ſhe could not pay
" for, and out of which ſhe would
" have been turned, though almoſt
" expiring, into the ſtreet, had ſhe not
" been relieved by the charity of a wo-
" man who was paſſing by, and to
" whom ſhe was entirely unknown: I
" ſay charity; for, however harſh the
" term may ſound, it is impoſſible to
" uſe a ſofter expreſſion conſiſtent with
" truth."

' You cannot imagine, Marianne,
' what an effect this word had upon
' thoſe who were preſent; though it
' would probably have wounded their
' nice ears, and have appeared too in-
' delicate, had I not thought that, in
' order to diveſt it of it's baſeneſs, and
' to render it touching, I ought to lay
' a ſtreſs upon it, and appear to ſur-
' mount with pain the confuſion it
' gave me: I ſaw them all lift up their
' hands, and, by ſeveral geſtures, ex-
' preſs their ſurprize and concern.
" Yes, Madam," continued I, " in
" this frightful ſituation was your mo-
" ther-in-law! this her dreadful con-
" dition! Her linen and cloaths were
" ready to be ſold, or at leaſt kept
" for a ſecurity, when the lady I am
" ſpeaking of, touched with compaſ-
" ſion, redeemed them, even without
" knowing her, or hoping to be paid
" again. She is ſtill in the ſame inn;
" from whence her illneſs will not yet
" permit her to be carried: that inn is
" in ſuch a ſtreet, and at ſuch a ſign.
" Conſult, now, with yourſelf—con-
" ſult with theſe gentlemen, your
" friends; for there needs no other
" judges between you and your mo-

" ther-in-law; and ſee if you can have " ſtill the courage to ſay that you will " not concern yourſelf with her affairs. " Here is a letter which ſhe writes to " my brother; and I leave it with " you."

' Here I took my leave, perfectly ' diſſatisfied with my ſiſter's behaviour. ' During this latter part of my diſ- ' courſe, I obſerved that ſhe coloured, ' and ſeemed agitated with ſhame and ' indignation, at having her inhuma- ' nity made ſo publick: but her friends ' could not conceal their aſtoniſhment ' and concern; and Mrs. Darciere, as ' ſoon as we were in her coach, let me ' know that ſhe was very much pleaſed ' with my talking with ſo much ſpirit. " Your ſiſter-in-law is a monſter," ' ſaid ſhe. " To what an extravagant " exceſs does her pitiful pride carry " her! I find you have little to hope " for from perſons ſo inſenſible; for " they who can be guilty of ſuch vile " ingratitude, may well be ſuſpected " to want every ſentiment of huma- " nity." When we returned to the ' inn, we found my mother expecting ' us with the greateſt impatience; but ' ſhe did not ſeem at all ſurprized at ' our reception, or at the young mar- ' chioneſs's haughty behaviour. " If " my ſon," ſaid ſhe, " whom I have " loved with ſuch an unbounded af- " fection, can abandon me, why ſhould " I wonder that his wife ſhould do ſo " too? It is I that am to blame, more " than they: perhaps, had I taken care " to have had his mind opened and en- " larged by uſeful knowledge; had he " been early inſpired with a love of " wiſdom, and a generous concern for " the happineſs of mankind; he would " have been incapable of treating me " as he has done! Oh! what reaſon " have I to reproach myſelf!" Two ' or three days after this, the marquis ' ſent my mother a note for a little mo- ' ney; and in his letter complained that ' I had treated his wife with diſreſpect; ' expoſed him before company; and at ' the ſame time deſired her to let him ' hear no more of her clamorous com- ' plaints, unleſs ſhe would ſpeak to ' him in private; and that, as for me, ' he did not deſire to ſee me. My ' mother began now to be ſomething ' better; and we no ſooner found her ' well enough to be removed, than we ' had her carried to our lodging, where ' we had room enough, and were ſur- ' rounded with a great many conveni- ' ences, which we wanted in the inn: ' but her palſy ſtill continued; and, ' notwithſtanding ſhe had all the ad- ' vice that could be procured, we be- ' gan to deſpair of her ever being per- ' fectly recovered. But, to keep up ' my ſpirits under this melancholy ' circumſtance, I received a letter from ' Mrs. Du Frainville, in which was ' incloſed another from Mr. Durſan, ' full of the moſt tender and pleaſing ' ſentiments: I found an inexpreſſible ' ſatisfaction in hearing from my ab- ' ſent lover; his recovery from his ill- ' neſs gave me the utmoſt joy; and I ' flattered myſelf that we ſhould carry ' on a moſt agreeable correſpondence. ' After this he wrote to me almoſt ' every poſt: I received his letters with ' tranſports; read them over a thou- ' ſand times; and as often kiſſed the ' dear characters, which conveyed to ' me the moſt delightful ideas. Our ' abſence ſeemed to increaſe our mu- ' tual paſſion; it gave me an opportu- ' nity of deſcribing the ſituation of my ' heart with greater freedom than I ' ſhould ever have ventured to have ' done in converſation: but this was a ' felicity too exquiſite to laſt long; his ' letters inſenſibly grew more gay and ' ſprightly than became a paſſionate, ' abſent lover. This I at firſt thought ' only proceeded from the frankneſs ' with which I had laid open my ſoul ' to him. " He loves me," ſaid I; " and he knows how tenderly I make " him a return; then why ſhould he " complain? This diſcovery makes " him think himſelf happy; and, as " he has nothing to fear from my ab- " ſence, he endeavours, by being " chearful, to render it leſs inſup- " portable to us both." But, alas! I ' was ſoon undeceived; his gaiety in- ' creaſed to ſuch a degree, that his let- ' ters at laſt contained nothing but a ' trifling, ceremonious reſpect. My ' mother, meanwhile, grew ſo fond of ' me, that ſhe could hardly bear me ' out of her ſight: ſhe ſeemed to have ' transferred all her affection from her ' ſon to me; and, upon every occaſion, ' reproached herſelf for her unkind- ' neſs, in a manner as ſevere as tender. ' My brother ſtill uſed her with the ' ſame neglect; and witheld from her ' what ſhe had a right to demand from

' him,

'him. As I had reaſon to be prejudiced againſt him, on account of his inhumanity to the moſt indulgent parent, I never deſired to ſee him; but, in order to ſupport my mother, and pay all her debts, I retrenched my expences, and lived as happily with her as her ill ſtate of health would permit. I was pleaſed with having it in my power to maintain her elegantly; and therefore did not care to apply to the law to recover her juſt claims from an ungrateful ſon; though Mrs. Darciere uſed many arguments to perſuade me to it. That lady, at laſt, returned into the country: and I had not lived in this manner above four months, when my mother had a return of her fever; which in a few days carried her off. How ſevere was my grief! I had juſt found a mother; and had juſt taſted the ſatisfaction of loving her, when I was at once deprived of her and all my comfort. What an irreparable loſs! How painful! how cruel! Forgive me, my dear Marianne,' cried ſhe, interrupting herſelf, at ſeeing the tears guſh from my eyes, 'for reminding you of the loſs of your dear mamma, Mrs. De Valville. I will paſs over this painful event: but firſt dry up your tears; they are both happy; and, perhaps, delighted to hear of our ſincere friendſhip.' I then embraced her; and ſhe proceeded.

'My mother being dead, I ſent to invite the marquis her ſon, with his lady, to the funeral; but they were in the country; which I was not ſorry for, as I imagined the levity of theſe perſons, ſo nearly related to her, would increaſe my affliction, and make it exceed all bounds: and, as I was no friend to that ridiculous pageantry with which we celebrate the funerals of the great, I contented myſelf with having her interred in a private, though decent manner.

'I had hitherto lived at Paris, in as retired a manner as if I had been in the country; for my only ſatisfaction had been in attending my mother; ſo that I had made but few friends; and, therefore, to divert my melancholy, I went abroad, and viſited ſome ladies whom I had but a very ſlender acquaintance with before; one of whom I took a particular fancy for: it was the officer's widow who took my mother into the country; ſhe happened now to be at Paris, and was one of thoſe I had invited to her funeral. Her gratitude to my mother, in her diſtreſs, for the ſervice ſhe had done her in her proſperity, was the firſt motive which induced me to chuſe her for my friend; and a little knowledge of her perſonal merit made me ſoon look upon her as a very valuable woman. She was a plain, good woman, of a moderate capacity; but then ſhe had a great deal of ſincerity: ſhe always ſpoke as ſhe thought; and ſcorned to do a baſe or a mean action; and was ſo pious, that I wonder ſhe did not end her days in a cloiſter. This perſon I made my confidante; for I always preferred a great ſtock of virtue to every other accompliſhment. As my couſin Durſan found that the law would not give her an opportunity of ſhewing her ingratitude to the world by depriving me of my ſubſiſtence, ſhe took a more effectual method to render me unhappy: ſhe conſtantly ſent me what money I had a claim to; her ſon had not wrote to me for ſome time; and I began to fear ſhe had prevailed upon him to baniſh me from his heart. I knew the aſcendant ſhe had over him; and looked upon this piece of treachery as the greateſt evil that could ever befal me; it was like a dagger to my heart: and this apprehenſion, together with his ſilence, continually gave me the moſt painful inquietudes. But, my dear Marianne, how can I deſcribe my aſtoniſhment, grief, and confuſion, when I received two letters at the ſame time; one from Mrs. Du Frainville, and the other from Mrs. Darciere; which told me that Durſan's mother had prevailed upon him to marry a young lady of great fortune, who had been one of my acquaintance! You, my dear, have experienced the ſame deplorable ſituation of mind; and, by referring to your own breaſt, can recollect the ſame diſtreſs, the ſame torment. My friend the officer's widow uſed thoſe arguments to me which I did to comfort you under Mr. De Valville's infidelity; and I at laſt was calmed by the force of her arguments: but began to be ſo diſguſted with mankind, that I reſolved to exclude myſelf

'ſelf from their ſociety for ever by 'ſhutting myſelf up in a convent. The 'reaſons which had deterred me be'fore now ſeemed weak and incon'cluſive. I conſidered the world as 'full of monſters of deceit and ingrati'tude: I thought it impoſſible for me 'ever to indulge a new paſſion; and 'was confident that I ſhould enjoy a 'ſolid peace and tranquillity in a ſo'ciety where I could be no longer a 'witneſs of that falſhood which I had 'ſufficiently experienced in the world. 'My friend approved of my reſolu'tion, and perſuaded me to put it 'ſpeedily in execution. This was the 'convent we fixed upon. I ſold the 'third part of Mr. Durſan's eſtate, 'which was my due; gave ſome lega'cies to the poor, and ſettled the reſt 'upon this houſe, before I took the 'veil. I entered upon my probation 'with the hopes that I ſhould be com'pleatly happy in this peaceful aſylum, 'and that I ſhould here bury all my 'cares. The firſt year every thing 'ſeemed to conſpire to make me pleaſed 'with my ſituation: the abbeſs and 'the nuns perpetually careſſed me, and 'flattered my vanity by the groſſeſt 'adulation. My beauty was a fa'vourite ſubject of diſcourſe: when I 'ſpoke, they extolled my wit with the 'moſt laviſh praiſes; when I ſmiled, 'they looked chearful; and when I 'was dull, they were melancholy. I 'was, they ſaid, the life of the con'verſation, and made a conſiderable 'addition to their happineſs. This 'behaviour was at firſt very diſagree'able; and I wiſhed for more plain'neſs and ſincerity: but flattery eaſily 'inſinuates itſelf into the minds of 'young people; and, before the year 'was expired, I began to think they 'were at leaſt ſincere in their profeſ'ſions; which was all that was ne'ceſſary to make me love them, and 'regard them as my friends. But I had 'no ſooner taken my vows than the 'ſcene was changed; I found that this 'was all artifice and deceit; I was de'graded from all my little honours. 'This ſoon diſguſted me; and I no 'ſooner found my error, than I re'proached my falſe friends: they 'laughed at me, ridiculed my ſorrow, 'and applauded themſelves for the 'cheat. Now the auſterities of the 'place became burdenſome to me; I 'grew frighted at the ſlavery I was to 'undergo; found myſelf a priſoner for 'life; and therefore abandoned my'ſelf to the utmoſt deſpair. Inſtead 'of religion, I found nothing here but 'little intrigues, and all the ill-hu'mours which ſpring from ſtrong paſ'ſions reſtrained by violence: and I 'aſſure you, that there is hardly a per'ſon amongſt us who would not ſacri'fice every thing to regain the dear 'liberty they once enjoyed.

'Thus, my dear friend, I have given 'you the hiſtory of my adventures. 'You ſee that I have been very un'happy; and I muſt now languiſh 'away the remainder of my miſerable 'life in an irkſome impriſonment, 'which the twenty years I have been 'accuſtomed to it can hardly render 'tolerable.'

'My dear friend,' cried I, tenderly embracing the nun, 'what a ſeries 'of ſtrange events! How lovely do 'your ſufferings make you appear! 'How cloſely do your ſhining vir'tues bind you to my heart! My dear, 'my amiable friend! I am ſhocked at 'the ingratitude of the world; and 'could not have imagined that it had 'been inhabited by ſuch monſters! 'perſons who are ſuch a diſgrace to 'human nature! But what have you 'heard of Mr. Durſan ſince his mar'riage?'—'Nothing at all,' returned ſhe, 'but that he is to the laſt degree 'unhappy: he lives with his wife in a 'continual ſtrife. I have been told 'that they are ſtrangers to that union 'of ſoul which is the bond of all hu'man felicity, and that they ſpend 'their lives in perpetual diſcord; but 'I have not heard any thing of them 'for many years.'

I am now, Madam, very weary; and ſhall therefore conclude this Part. I intend, in the next, to ſend you the concluſion of my own adventures.

END OF THE ELEVENTH PART.

THE

THE

VIRTUOUS ORPHAN.

PART XII.

NOTHING, Madam, could be better adapted to ſoothe the melancholy turn of my mind, than my friend the nun's ſtory; which received inexpreſſible charms from her graceful manner of relating it: but you muſt not imagine that ſhe had an opportunity of telling it me all at once; no, ſhe was ſometimes called off to attend the pious exerciſes of the houſe: but as nothing material happened in theſe intervening ſpaces, I rather choſe to give it you altogether, than to interrupt her narration by little circumſtances that have no relation to it.

I had been now in the convent five or ſix days, and was extremely afflicted to hear no news from my dear Valville and Mrs. Dorſin; when, as I was one morning in the garden, I heard, at ſome diſtance, one of the nuns mention a young lady's being in the parlour with one of the boarders; and, by the deſcription ſhe gave of her, I thought it could be none but Miſs Du Bois: I was ſeized with an extraordinary joy at this diſcovery, even before I was certain that it was really her, and ran immediately to the parlour, where, indeed, I found her juſt taking leave of one of the boarders. As ſhe did not know that I was in that convent, ſhe was extremely glad to ſee me; and, as ſoon as the lady retired, broke into the warmeſt profeſſions of friendſhip, whilſt I ſhould infallibly have flown into her arms, had I not been reſtrained by the grate. When our firſt tranſports were over, 'My dear friend,' ſaid ſhe, 'what is 'the reaſon that you reſolve to ſhut 'yourſelf up here? How can you think 'of withdrawing from your friends, and 'leaving Mr. De Valville in abſolute 'deſpair? He, Mrs. Dorſin tells me, 'cannot ſupport your abſence; he is 'ſurprized at ſuch a ſudden reſolution: 'and even Mrs. Dorſin herſelf is af'flicted on your account; and would 'have ſeen you before this time, had 'ſhe not been much indiſpoſed by a 'cold, which obliges her to keep her 'room. Indeed, Miſs,' added ſhe, 'you 'cannot think how tenderly you are 'beloved!'—'Ah! how much are you 'all deceived!' cried I: 'I have not 'the leaſt deſire to be a nun; and have 'been very uneaſy at being conſtrained 'to be here contrary to my inclina'tions.'—'Why, that is very ſurpriz'ing!' returned ſhe: 'what reaſon, then, 'has the abbeſs to write ſuch tender 'letters to perſuade them not to fetch 'you; in which ſhe extols your piety, 'and ſays you are inclined to retire from 'the world? Mrs. Dorſin ſuſpected 'that all was not right; for ſhe could 'hardly believe, ſhe ſaid, that it was 'poſſible for you to be guilty of ſuch 'levity, as to deſire her to come for 'you the next day, and then to permit 'the abbeſs to forbid it. But as ſhe 'could not ſuſpect the good lady's ve'racity and probity, ſhe was at a loſs 'how to account for ſuch an extraor'dinary procedure.'—'Well, my dear,' ſaid I; 'it is now in your power to do 'me the greateſt ſervice by undeceiv'ing them. Pleaſe to ſtay a moment,' added I, 'while I write a line or two 'to Mr. De Valville: you do not know 'how my heart beats with joy at the

'thoughts

'thoughts of being delivered from this dreadful captivity.' On this I ſat down, and wrote as follows.

'SIR,

'I Do not know what you have thought 'of my confinement: if I am dear 'to you, I am ſure it muſt give you the 'greateſt pain. This I know from 'what I feel in my own breaſt. In-'deed, I cannot tell what the abbeſs 'has wrote to you and Mrs. Dorſin, 'that could prevent your coming for 'me at the time I appointed. She 'has heard that my dear mother has 'left me ſomething conſiderable, and 'therefore would prevail upon me to 'ſettle it upon her convent: ſhe would 'be glad to make a breach between 'us; take care that you are not im-'poſed upon. I have incloſed a letter 'which ſhe deſired me to give you; ſhe 'expected I ſhould break it open: 'but ſhe did not know me. I have too 'much reſpect for you, to deſire to 'know what you, perhaps, would con-'ceal from me. In ſhort, I ſee through 'her artifice; and without your aſſiſt-'ance ſhall be conſtrained to be miſe-'rable. Fly then, Sir, to ſave the di-'ſtreſſed

MARIANNE!

'P. S. Pray, if poſſible, bring Mrs. 'Dorſin with you.'

As ſoon as I had ſealed this letter, I gave it to Miſs Du Bois, and deſired her to carry it immediately to Mr. De Valville; and then went to acquaint my friend the nun with what I had done; who was ſo good as to ſympathize with me in my joy, though ſhe told me ſhe ſhould be a ſufferer by my happineſs, as I ſhould deprive her of taſting the ſatisfactions of friendſhip. Here we tenderly embraced each other, and ſaid all that the ſincereſt affection can dictate to two perſons who are going to ſuffer the pain of ſeparation. Meanwhile Miſs Du Bois went to Mr. De Valville's; but was there told that he was gone to ſee Mrs. Dorſin: ſhe then went thither, and ſoon filled them both with a pleaſing ſurprize. Notwithſtanding Mrs. Dorſin's indiſpoſition, ſhe reſolved to accompany him; and in two hours time I had the ſatisfaction of being called for. As I entered the parlour I ſaw Valville, who immediately caſt upon me a look of tranſport; which I returned with thoſe lively glances which ſpring from a mind raiſed from the depth of deſpair to the height of it's wiſhes. 'O my 'dear!' cried he in a tender tone, as ſoon as he ſaw me, 'have you never 'ceaſed to love me? Is it true that you 'have not deſired to ſnatch yourſelf 'from my embraces, by immuring 'yourſelf in this convent? Thou dear-'eſt, thou beſt of women!' continued he, 'may I ſtill hope one day to call 'thee mine? What a ſweet viciſſitude 'of paſſions have you occaſioned in my 'mind! Two hours ago I was lament-'ing my wretchedneſs, and reproach-'ing myſelf as being unworthy of taſt-'ing any real happineſs, and was even 'loſt in affliction and deſpair; but now 'I am only ſenſible to the moſt exqui-'ſite joy!'—'Come, Sir! enough, 'enough!' cried I; 'pray defer this 'rapture till I am ſafe from my priſon: 'where is Mrs. Dorſin, that I do not 'ſee her here?'—'She is gone to ſpeak 'to the abbeſs, and reprove her for im-'poſing upon us,' returned he: 'ſhe 'will ſoon be back; and we will take 'you to her houſe.' Here we were interrupted by a lay-ſiſter, who came to tell me that the abbeſs deſired to ſpeak to me. On which I went to her immediately, and found her with Mrs. Dorſin, who ſeemed to be in a heat, as if ſhe had been talking ſeverely to the old lady. 'My dear child,' ſaid the abbeſs, as ſoon as I entered the room, 'this lady and I have had a little diſ-'pute about thee. I confeſs my tender 'affection for thee, and thy engaging 'behaviour, have made me ſtrain a 'point of conſcience, in order to keep 'thee with me: what would not one 'do to have the happineſs of preſerving 'ſuch a lovely creature here, whoſe 'piety would be an ornament to my 'houſe? Ah, Miſs! thou art ſenſible 'of my affection for thee; and I dare 'ſay wilt do me the juſtice to believe I 'ſhould not have preſumed to have 'wrote thoſe letters to this lady, hadſt 'thou not ſeemed inclined to enter into 'this moſt holy ſtate. I knew thy pious 'reſolution; and was willing to give 'thee time to cheriſh it, by keeping thee 'a little longer with us.'—'Doubtleſs, 'Madam,' returned I, 'I muſt be in-'finitely obliged to you for your care 'of me, as well as of my ſmall for-

'tune;

'tune; ſince, as you ſay, I ſhould be 'infallibly miſerable if I did not for-'ſake the world; and that, by beſtow-'ing my fortune upon your houſe, I 'ſhould certainly purchaſe everlaſting 'felicity. If we may buy a place in 'Heaven for ſuch a trifle as two or 'three thouſand livres a year, who 'would not beſtow their money to ſuch 'an advantage!' This was ſpoke with an air that made Mrs. Dorſin ſmile; ſhe ſeemed pleaſed at my gentle, though ſevere reproof, while the abbeſs caſt down her eyes: when I added—'Eſpecially, 'Madam, as my dear mamma was ſo 'extremely ſolicitous about my taking 'the veil!'—'That I never heard of 'before,' cried Mrs. Dorſin; 'it is the 'laſt thing I ſhould have thought of!— 'How, Madam,' cried ſhe, addreſſing herſelf to the abbeſs, 'could you aſſert 'ſuch a notorious falſehood?' Here ſhe ſat for ſome time ſilent, with a viſible confuſion in her looks; and then lifting up her eyes—'I am ſorry, child,' ſaid ſhe at laſt, 'that you put ſuch an un-'kind conſtruction upon the little ar-'tifice I have made uſe of to keep you 'amongſt us, as to inſinuate that it 'ſprang from any other motive than a 'ſincere affection for thee. Thou wilt 'ever be dear to me; and I ſhall pray 'for thy happineſs as long as I live. 'Farewel, child! I will go and order 'your box to be brought down.—Your 'ſervant, Madam,' added ſhe to Mrs. Dorſin. Here ſhe left us in a manner that ſhewed ſhe was glad to break off this converſation. Mrs. Dorſin and I went back to the parlour, where I took my leave of the nuns: Miſs Terviere, my friend, I found waiting for me in the paſſage; ſhe embraced me with tears; and I confeſs I felt a great deal of pain at ſeparating myſelf from this lady. I then embraced the reſt of the nuns and boarders, who flocked about me: and my box being placed in the coach, Mrs. Dorſin, my dear Valville, and I, drove away.

As ſoon as we were in the coach, Valville pulled a letter out of his pocket; and, giving me a look which ſpoke a thouſand tender things—'Dear Miſs,' ſaid he, 'I cannot help applauding 'your diſcretion in not breaking open 'this letter; I confeſs I wrote it ſome 'time ago to Miſs Varthon, and ſhe 'without doubt dropped it in her hurry 'of going away: but they have altered 'the date, that you might imagine it 'was ſent to her after ſhe left the con-'vent; in order, I ſuppoſe, to make you 'think I ſtill carry on a correſpondence 'with her.' We then diverted ourſelves a little with the abbeſs's pious zeal for my happineſs, which had ſuch extraordinary effects; whilſt Valville ſeemed extremely pleaſed at the juſt confuſion we had given her, in letting her know that we could ſee through her hypocritical pretences. When we arrived at Mrs. Dorſin's, we found Miſs Du Bois waiting for our return, in company with our good friend the officer, who very politely complimented me on my being ſet at liberty; for that young lady had given him an account of the abbeſs's plot. I then went to Miſs Du Bois, and returned her civilities on this occaſion, by giving her the moſt ſincere thanks for the ſhare ſhe had in procuring my enlargement. I, in ſome ſenſe, looked upon her as my deliverer; and methought I felt a peculiar pleaſure in regarding her in this light, as it ſeemed as if Heaven rewarded me for relieving her from her diſtreſs, by making her relieve me from mine. This thought not only filled me with inward ſatisfaction and complacency, but diffuſed through my mind a kind of pious delight; which, though calm and ſecret, yet was nevertheleſs exquiſitely ſweet and delightful.

I now lived with Mrs. Dorſin in a manner that ſhewed the great eſteem that lady had for me: ſhe took a peculiar pleaſure in my company; and I enjoyed with her all the advantages which ſpring from the ſincereſt friendſhip. She treated me with the ſame reſpect and freedom as my mamma had done; and the ſervants, in all their actions, ſhewed they modelled themſelves according to their miſtreſs's behaviour. Mr. De Valville came almoſt every day to ſee me; and ſeldom unaccompanied by my friend the officer, a nobleman for whom I had an eſteem, mixed with a ſurprizing veneration and regard. Their converſation was always lively and entertaining; though we ſometimes diſcourſed on the moſt ſerious ſubjects, which were handled in a manner that gave us a ſatisfaction and delight infinitely ſuperior to that of laughter.

One day Mrs. Dorſin led us into her library, which was compoſed of a very curious collection of all thoſe pieces in our

our language which are able to improve the judgment, or inform and entertain the mind. Here I had already ſpent many agreeable hours. Valville and the officer complimented Mrs. Dorſin on the juſtneſs of her taſte, in her choice of the moſt ſolid and polite authors; and expreſſed the moſt lively ſatisfaction at ſeeing her poſſeſſed of ſuch an ineſtimable treaſure. I made ſome reflections on the ſentiments of ſome of the pieces I had read; and was going on with my remarks, when Mrs. Dorſin aroſe to bring us the book I was commending, in order to turn to a paſſage which I had been ſaying I was charmed with; but ſhe happened to let it fall. I ſtarted up in a hurry of complaiſance, to take it up for her; but, in ſtooping, broke my necklace, and the beads were immediately ſcattered about the room. As they were of pearl, and a preſent from my mamma, I ſet a value upon them proportionable to my tenderneſs for that dear lady; and we were immediately all employed in picking them up. When we had found them all, I deſired Valville to give me ſomething to put them in; when the officer haſtily putting his hand into his pocket, preſented me with a paper, which, upon my going to receive, he drew back, put again in his pocket, and gave me another: 'I beg 'your pardon, Miſs,' ſaid he: 'this is 'the laſt letter I received from a dear 'brother, whom I have not ſeen theſe 'twenty years.'—'A brother!' cried Mrs. Dorſin; 'I thought you had ne'ver had any but the Count De V——: 'but, Sir, can you perſuade us to be'lieve you ſet ſuch a great value upon 'that paper, while you carry it ſo care'leſsly in your pocket.'—'Yes, Ma'dam,' returned he. 'I was reading 'it this morning, when a particular 'friend came into my parlour unper'ceived, and tapped me on the ſhoul'der: I ſtarted; and, being unwilling to 'diſturb his gaiety by my ſerious re'flections, I ſlipped it into my pocket, 'and ſtrove to divert my growing me'lancholy, which the thoughts of my 'brother had occaſioned, by entering 'into converſation with him.'—'But, 'Sir,' returned Mrs. Dorſin, 'you ſay 'you have not ſeen your brother theſe 'twenty years: what ſort of a perſon 'was he? Has he been abroad all this 'while, or is he ſince dead?'—'The 'brother, Madam, I am ſpeaking of,' ſaid he, 'was in all reſpects a worthy 'man: his perſon was amiable; he had 'fine ſenſe, improved by extenſive 'learning; he had a heart perfectly ge'nerous, and truly noble; and was an 'ornament to his country, as well as 'the delight of his friends. He mar'ried a moſt accompliſhed lady; and, to 'give you her picture, you muſt look 'upon the amiable Marianne; for I aſ'ſure you that there is ſomethi ng in her 'countenance which greatly reſembled 'my ſiſter's, who was about her age 'when ſhe was married; at which time 'I went into the army, and had been 'there two or three years, when he ſent 'me this letter, to inform me that 'ſomebody had rendered him ſuſpect'ed to the government, of carrying on 'a correſpondence with the enemy, and 'that he deſigned to retire with his wife 'and daughter, a lovely little creature, 'till his innocence could be cleared 'up. Since this time, I have never 'been able to learn in what country he 'choſe to reſide, or even whether he be 'yet living: ſo that my other brother 'has taken the poſſeſſion of his eſtate 'and title; which he now enjoys.' I heard this ſtory with a great deal of emotion; but had not the confidence to enquire more minutely into the circumſtances of this fact; ſo that the converſation turned again upon books. Many fine ſentiments were taken notice of; and though nothing could be more charming than the remarks which were made upon them, I could not help ſometimes glancing a thought at the officer's hiſtory of his brother, though I could give no account of the reaſon of my intereſting myſelf in what apparently ſo little concerned me. When they were gone, I retired to my room, and conſidered again every circumſtance of this ſtory: my heart fluttered whenever I thought of his brother, and my bearing ſo near a reſemblance to his ſiſter. But as I thought it impoſſible to prove that I was the daughter he mentioned, though I ſhould be really ſo, I reſolved to conceal my conjectures, ſince I had ſo little foundation for them, and not to acquaint Mrs. Dorſin with my thoughts, leſt ſhe ſhould be diſpleaſed at my vanity. How unaccountable are the ſtrange impreſſions which even trifling circumſtances raiſe in the mind! Sure ſome happy, ſome kind ſpirits, ſome angelick beings, have a communication with

with our thoughts, and point out the way to our felicity!

I had now been about ſix months at Mrs. Dorſin's; in which time I ſometimes went with her to paſs a day or two together at the country ſeat which Mrs. De Valville had given me. Every thing now conſpired to make me happy: Valville preſſed me daily to conſent to have our marriage celebrated; but I ſtill found ſome excuſes to defer it. But the time now haſtened when I was to find my family, my relations, my friends; when I was to taſte the unutterable ſatisfaction of knowing thoſe whom nature has given us ſtrong propenſities to love and revere. I think I told you, Madam, that I brought with me to Paris the little cloaths I was dreſſed in when diſcovered in the ſtage-coach in the arms of the murdered lady: theſe I had taken out of my box, and put them into my cheſt of drawers at Mrs. Dorſin's. One day, that lady going up ſtairs for ſomething ſhe wanted, I gave her my keys, and deſired her to look in my drawers for my work; when ſhe caſt her eyes upon thoſe pieces of my early finery, and brought them down ſtairs with her. 'What have you got here?' ſaid ſhe, as ſhe returned. 'Here is ſome-'thing extremely pretty! This ſilk, 'though it is old-faſhioned, is ſome 'of the richeſt I ever ſaw!' She then obſerved my head-dreſs, and admired the fineneſs of the lace, and the beauty of the needle-work. 'Is this the dreſs 'you was found in, my dear?' ſaid ſhe. 'I think I heard you had brought 'it with you: and I wonder we had 'none of us the curioſity to ſee it be-'fore.'—'Yes, Madam,' ſaid I; 'Mrs. De Roſand made me bring it 'with me to town; but for what rea-'ſon I cannot tell, unleſs it was to be 'proof that I am not of mean extrac-'tion.'—'That lady was very pru-'dent,' returned ſhe: 'this is a dreſs 'fit for a princeſs!' She then obſerved a cypher curiouſly worked in one of the ſeams; and then, ſmiling upon me—'I do not know,' added ſhe, 'but this may one day bring you to 'the knowledge of your family; when 'Valville's friends, who now look up-'on you with contempt, will, per-'haps, find themſelves greatly ho-'noured by your alliance.'—'This is 'a very pleaſing thought!' ſaid I; 'but, was I of the blood-royal, I had 'rather continue thus ignorant of the 'grandeur of my birth, than be oblig-'ed to forſake my dear Valville; for 'the higheſt honours would not make 'life tolerable to me without him. 'Whatever are my family or circum-'ſtances, my higheſt felicity will be 'that of being his: he who could ſtoop 'to marry me, a foundling and an or-'phan, unknown to the world, and in 'the loweſt indigence, would deſerve 'me, though I were born to wear a 'crown. But why do you talk ſo, 'Madam?' continued I. 'Is it poſ-'ſible that you can, from theſe trifles, 'give me any light into my family?' —'I do not know,' ſaid ſhe: 'but I 'muſt ſee your good friend the officer; 'and, perhaps, by his means, we may 'learn ſomething that will not be diſ-'agreeable to you to know.'—'The 'officer, Madam!' replied I, bluſhing; 'do you think he can give us any in-'formation? How I ſhould rejoice to 'find myſelf allied to that worthy 'man! a perſon for whom I have ne-'ver ceaſed to have the higheſt eſteem! 'But when ſhall we ſee him, Madam?' —'I will ſend to him directly,' ſaid ſhe, 'and deſire his company at ſup-'per: I am as impatient to ſee him as 'thou canſt be. Come, do not look 'thoughtful: if I am miſtaken in my 'conjectures, we are only where we 'were.'

You can form no idea, Madam, of the exceſs of my joy on this occaſion. I compared the impreſſion the officer's ſtory of his brother made in my mind, and the probability that I was his daughter, ſince I ſo nearly reſembled his lady; I compared theſe circumſtances, I ſay, with Mrs. Dorſin's perſuaſion that our military friend could unravel this event; and I did not doubt but ſhe had ſome reaſons for her opinion, which ſhe was willing to conceal. Full of theſe thoughts, I made an excuſe to retire to my room, that I might be at leiſure to indulge my reflections. 'Are my misfortunes, then, 'at an end?' cried I. 'Shall I taſte 'the delights that reſult from indulg-'ing thoſe ſocial affections which make 'up ſuch a large part of human feli-'city? Shall I have a family and a 'name? Shall I have relations who 'will be dear to me, though now un-'known? What a fund of new and

'unexpected delight!—O my dear 'Valville! ſhall I have it in my power 'to convince the world that it is no mer-'cenary views, but the pureſt, the ſin-'cereſt, the moſt tender affection, which 'has poſſeſſed my ſoul, and makes me 'conſent to be thine?' Here a guſh of tears forced their way, and I melted into the moſt charming ſoftneſs. 'O my 'dear mother!' then cried I, 'you 'have been cenſured for loving me; and 'the permitting your ſon to do ſo has 'been regarded as the greateſt weak-'neſs: now your conduct will be ap-'proved, and your unkind relations 'will bluſh at their inſolence. I ſhall 'hear your name mentioned with ho-'nour by thoſe who have been moſt in-'vidious, moſt ready to defame it by 'their unkind cenſures.—But, per-'haps,' cried I, recollecting myſelf, and drying my eyes, 'all this joyful 'proſpect may at laſt prove a vain chi-'mera, and every flattering hope va-'niſh as ſoon as the officer appears! 'There may be certain reaſons to prove 'that I am not his brother's daughter; 'and ſhould we have arguments for-'cible enough to ſatisfy ourſelves, yet 'we may want ſufficient proof to con-'vince thoſe whoſe intereſt it is to diſ-'believe us. My birth may, at beſt, 'be only doubtful; and I may never 'have it in my power to convince the 'world of the ſincerity of my tender-'neſs; or give Valville any proof of 'the dignity of my paſſion, by offering 'him a fortune perhaps as large as his 'own.'

Thus I went on, wavering betwixt my hopes and fears; ſometimes de-lighting myſelf with the moſt pleaſing proſpects, and then afflicting myſelf at the apprehenſions of a diſappointment: at laſt Mrs. Dorſin, a little ſurprized at my being ſo long alone, ſent a ſer-vant to tell me ſhe begged the favour of my company. When I went down, ſhe deſired to know what it was that had diſturbed me; for ſhe ſaw ſome traces of the trouble of my thoughts in my countenance; on which I ingenuouſly opened my heart to her, without con-cealing the leaſt article of my uneaſi-neſs. 'I cannot bear to ſee you ſo 'concerned,' ſaid ſhe, 'about the event 'of our enquiry: is it any great mat-'ter whether you oblige Mr. De Val-'ville, or he you? Our military friend 'has ſent word that he will be with us 'preſently: and I have one piece of ad-'vice to give you; that is, to take no 'notice of what we are about to your 'lover; it will be time enough to men-'tion it to him when you can do it with 'a grace.'—'I am entirely of your 'opinion, Madam,' returned I: 'Val-'ville ſhall be ignorant of our thoughts 'till a diſcovery of them may contri-'bute to his happineſs.' Here ſome-body knocked at the door; at which my heart began to flutter afreſh. 'Now,' ſaid I to myſelf, 'this important mo-'ment approaches! Oh, that this pain-'ful ſuſpenſe was over!' The officer preſently entered the room, and ſaluted us with an air of unuſual gaiety. 'I 'am very much obliged to you, ladies,' ſaid he, 'for the honour you confer 'upon me.'—'It is we who are 'obliged, Sir,' ſaid Mrs. Dorſin: 'we wanted to conſult with you about 'an affair of conſequence; and, to 'prevent our being interrupted by com-'pany, we will loſe no time, but enter 'upon it immediately. I have by me 'ſome cloaths which belonged to an 'infant; and I want your opinion of 'them. Pray, take notice of this 'head-dreſs! Nay, Sir, do not ſmile,' added ſhe, 'before you have heard me.' —'Indeed, Madam,' returned he, 'I 'have no judgment in ſuch things!'— 'That may be, Sir,' replied ſhe: 'but 'I want you carefully to examine ſome 'cyphers curiouſly worked in this 'ſeam; perhaps they may give us ſome 'light into a certain young lady's fa-'mily.' He then took it in his hand, and Mrs. Dorſin explained the letters to him; whilſt I trembled, and was in the utmoſt pain for the event. After he had obſerved it for ſome time, he gave a ſigh; and, looking at Mrs. Dor-ſin and me with an air that ſhewed ſome emotion—'May I ſee the lady?' ſaid he. 'You do ſee her!' ſaid Mrs. Dor-ſin; 'it is Marianne! Theſe are the 'things ſhe was found in when taken 'out of the ſtage-coach.'—'O my 'dear Marianne!' cried he, riſing, with his eyes full of tenderneſs, 'I muſt in-'ſtantly endeavour to unravel this af-'fair: you are, perhaps, my niece! I 'ſee here the initial letters of her name: 'and here,' ſaid he, pointing to ano-ther place, 'are thoſe of my brother 'and ſiſter, whom I have ſo long loſt!—

'Permit

'Permit me to embrace you: I will 'ride poſt inſtantly to the count my 'brother; he is now at Verſailles; and, 'as he lived at Paris when my brother 'retired from hence, perhaps he, or my 'mother, who lives with him, may re-'member all the particulars of this 'dreſs; and, if you will give me leave, 'I will take it with me.'—'Pray do, 'Sir!' ſaid I. He then tenderly em-braced me; and parted, with his eyes full of a manly ſoftneſs.

As ſoon as he was gone I burſt into tears: 'My dear Mrs. Dorſin!' cried I, throwing my arms about her neck, 'I ſhall be happy beyond my utmoſt 'wiſhes!—My God! what felicity doſt 'thou prepare for me! What gratitude 'is due to thee! May I never forget 'thy goodneſs!—O Madam! my dear 'friend! what a happy turn this will 'give to my affairs! Valville will be 'no more reproached with loving an 'object unworthy of his affection!'—'My dear,' ſaid ſhe, weeping too, and holding me in her arms, 'I heartily 'ſympathize with thee in thy ſatisfac-'tion! But let us ſtill conceal it from 'the world: take care you do not let 'Mr. De Valville know it! We will 'ſurprize him with the news all at 'once, when we have heard the ſucceſs 'of your uncle's journey.'—'I agree 'to it, Madam,' returned I: 'but how 'agreeable the diſcovery will be to 'him! I cannot help anticipating the 'ſatisfaction he will feel on this occa-'ſion!'

As Valville, by ſome means or other, was prevented from paying me a viſit this evening, I had time, againſt the next day, to confirm myſelf in my re-ſolution of concealing for ſome time the diſcovery which was breaking out, and arm myſelf with ſuch an equani-mity of temper as to make it impoſſible to diſcover any thing from my beha-viour. As he had not been with me the day before, he came two or three hours ſooner than uſual; and was at Mrs. Dorſin's even before dinner. As ſoon as we were alone, he appeared im-patient at my delays in deferring the completion of our mutual happineſs; and preſſed me to fix upon the day which was to make me his, in ſuch an engaging manner, that he prevailed up-on me to be more haſty than I intended; and I conſented that I would be his wife in ſix weeks time. Though he was pleaſed with this promiſe, as I could eaſily ſee by his countenance, which diſcovered an unuſual ſatisfac-tion; yet he endeavoured to make me ſhorten that time by every argument which he thought could prevail upon me. 'And why ſix weeks, my dear 'Marianne?' ſaid he, taking my hand, and preſſing it between his. 'Can 'you love me, and yet deſire to tor-'ment me with needleſs delays? Sure 'your tenderneſs muſt be greatly in-'ferior to mine! Did you know how 'painful it is to me to be abſent from 'you; did you know with what re-'luctance I am forced to leave you 'when I have been bleſſed with your 'company; and with what impatience 'I wait till I can ſee you again; I am 'ſure you would pity me, and haſten 'my felicity. But, alas! my follies 'have juſtly rendered me leſs dear to 'you than I have been; and it would 'be unreaſonable in me, after ſo much 'ingratitude, to expect an equal re-'turn of affection.' Here he ſtopped, and gave me ſuch a look as touched my very ſoul. 'Indeed, Sir,' returned I, 'you do not do me juſtice; you 'have no reaſon to accuſe me of cruel-'ty: and perhaps I might, with the 'ſtricteſt truth, aſſure you that my 'tenderneſs is not at all inferior to 'yours. How, then, is it poſſible that 'I ſhould take a pleaſure in giving you 'pain? You ought rather to conclude 'that I have ſome reaſons for defer-'ring the completion of our happi-'neſs: and, I aſſure you, they are ſuch 'as even you will approve of.' While we were talking thus, Mrs. Dorſin en-tered the room; on which we changed the ſubject of our converſation, and talked of indifferent matters till it was time for Valville to retire.

The next day, in the afternoon, as I was reading in the library, Mrs. Dor-ſin came to me with an air that ex-preſſed the moſt lively ſatisfaction. 'My dear,' ſaid ſhe, ſmiling, 'what 'will you give me for a letter from 'our friend the officer, whom I muſt 'now call your uncle? I have juſt re-'ceived one from him, with another 'incloſed for you. Here, Miſs,' added ſhe, 'are both.' I took them, and opened Mrs. Dorſin's letter; which, as near as I can remember, was to this effect—

'IMPATIENT, Madam, to be certain of my happineſs in being related to the amiable Marianne, I have endeavoured, ever ſince I left you, to gain all poſſible information; and not without ſucceſs. As ſoon as I arrived at my brother's, I went to wait upon my mother the counteſs dowager, who was a little indiſpoſed in her chamber: there I found my ſiſter, and ſeveral other ladies of diſtinction. I took the firſt opportunity to ſhew them the cap I received from you; which I pretended I had found on the road. I gave it to my mother; ſhe looked at it for ſome time; and then taking off her ſpectacles, and lifting up her eyes, I ſaw them ſwimming in tears. "My poor child!" ſaid ſhe; "alas! what is become of thee!—What you have found," ſaid ſhe to me, "puts me in mind of your brother and ſiſter." And then turning to a lady who ſat by her—"This, Madam," continued ſhe, "is extremely like the cap you made a preſent of to my grand-daughter." The lady then took it; and had no ſooner caſt her eyes upon it, than ſhe cried out, with aſtoniſhment—'It is the ſame! I perfectly remember it; for I made it myſelf. What is become of my dear friend the counteſs? May I never flatter myſelf with the hopes of ſeeing her again?" She then aſked me where I found it; on which I related, in few words, Marianne's hiſtory. My mother wept at the loſs of her ſon and daughter; at the ſame time that ſhe rejoiced at the thought of ſeeing again her grand-daughter; and was raviſhed at the idea of finding her a lady of ſuch merit as I juſtly repreſented her. Meanwhile all the ladies appeared in the greateſt amazement; but my ſiſter held down her head, ſeemed diſpleaſed at the diſcovery, and made ſome objections to Miſs Marianne's being her niece; which, however, were ſoon anſwered. My brother ſays he will joyfully reſign the eſtate, which is her due, as ſoon as her right to it can be proved. I am now on the road to Bourdeaux, and but a few miles from the village at which my dear niece received her education. I am, Madam, yours, &c.

J. De N——.'

The other letter, of which I have ſtill the copy, was exactly as follows—

'DEAR MISS,

'IT would be in vain for me to pretend to deſcribe the joy I feel at the reflection of being ſo nearly related to a perſon whoſe ſhining virtues would give a luſtre to the higheſt ſtations of life, and make nobility truly noble. I have offered you my heart, and have loved you with all the tenderneſs of a paſſionate lover; but you no ſooner cruſhed my hopes of being yours than I gave laws to my deſires, and aſpired to deſerve the character of a ſincere, honeſt, and diſintereſted friend. To that dear name I have now another claim—that of blood; but this can add nothing to my zeal for your happineſs, which, ever ſince I knew you, was dearer to me than my own. Believe me, dear Miſs, I intereſt myſelf in all that concerns you; I ſhare in your felicity; and wiſh you and Mr. De Valville all the ſatisfactions that virtue, innocence, and love, can beſtow. In a few days I ſhall ſee you again; when I ſhall have an opportunity of telling you how much I am, my dear niece, your affectionate friend,

'J. De N——.'

You imagine, perhaps, Madam, that I was now tranſported with the utmoſt joy; that I gave a looſe to my tranſports, ſince the diſtant proſpect of this happineſs had given me ſuch delight: ſo far from it, I read theſe letters with great calmneſs, undiſturbed by any violent emotions. They contained nothing very ſurprizing; nothing that I was not already prepared for: reflection had made the thoughts of theſe new honours familiar to my mind; and they inſenſibly grew leſs charming as I was more accuſtomed to them.

'Well, my dear,' ſaid Mrs. Dorſin, laughing, as ſoon as I had finiſhed reading theſe two letters, 'do not you think the officer (your uncle I ſhould ſay) is grown very gallant? He writes as paſſionately as a young lover, at the ſame time that he preſerves the tenderneſs of a father. Such a friend ought to be eſteemed as an invaluable bleſſing.'—'It is true, Madam,' replied I; 'my being related

'lated to a perſon of ſuch merit is not 'the leaſt advantage I ſhall derive from 'this diſcovery; and I ſhall ſet a greater 'value upon his friendſhip than upon 'my father's eſtate, which I ſhall ob-'tain through his means: he is not 'only my friend, but my dear Val-'ville's too. Such a noble, ſuch a 'diſintereſted friend, is one of the 'greateſt bleſſings of life: he will be, 'at the ſame time, an uncle, a father, 'and a brother, to me.'—'You are 'in the right,' returned Mrs. Dorſin. 'How aſſiduous he is in promoting 'your happineſs! What pains does he 'take to clear up the obſcurity of your 'birth, and recover you from the ob-'livion into which your firſt misfor-'tunes have involved you! With what 'diligence does he endeavour to raiſe 'you to thoſe honours you were born 'to enjoy, and to procure you the poſ-'ſeſſion of an eſtate which might fall 'to him after his brother's deceaſe! 'Happy the perſons who have ſuch a 'friend; but doubly happy they who 'know how to prize him as they 'ought!'

Two or three days after this, Mrs. Dorſin aſked Valville and I to go with her to pay a viſit to a lady of her acquaintance, that lived at a village a few leagues from Paris: we readily accepted the offer, and ſet out as ſoon as we had dined. We were received with a great deal of politeneſs by an elderly gentleman and lady; and, upon Mrs. Dorſin's preſenting us both to them as two of her deareſt friends who were ſhortly to be married, we were careſſed in a very engaging manner. 'We 'think ourſelves extremely obliged to 'you, Madam,' ſaid the old gentle-man, 'for the honour you do us, in 'giving us an opportunity of know-'ing thoſe who are worthy of your 'eſteem. I think I have ſomewhere 'ſeen theſe two amiable perſons.'—'Yes, Sir,' replied Mrs. Dorſin; 'Miſs Marianne was once at my houſe 'with this gentleman and his mother, 'when you entered juſt as they were 'taking their leave of me: I ſuppoſe 'you might ſee them then. They 'are both of very noble families; and, 'I aſſure you, I think myſelf greatly 'honoured in the ſhare I flatter myſelf 'I have in their affections. But where 'are your ſon and the young ladies?'—'O Madam,' ſaid the old lady, 'they will be here preſently.' She had hardly ſpoke, when we ſaw a young gentleman paſs by the window ſmacking his whip, calling his hounds, and, in ſhort, making a moſt hideous noiſe. He preſently after entered the room with a remarkable air of clowniſh ruſticity: he was booted and ſpurred; had a great-coat on with a jockey's cap; and, as ſoon as he appeared, gave ſuch a ſcrape with his foot, that I verily believe he left a mark a yard long. As ſoon as he took his ſeat, Mrs. Dorſin unhappily aſked him if he had had any ſport; at which he began with his ſtarting his game; and travelled again over all the ground where had been the ſcene of his morning's diverſion; related all the windings and doublings of the hare; told us who every field belonged to through which he rode; and expatiated on the merit of his hounds: and all this interwoven with a thouſand oaths and curſes, till we were ſo weary with his tedious impertinence, that we were about to take our leave, as the only means of extricating ourſelves from the trouble he gave us. But what moſt ſurprized us, was to ſee his father and mother, who appeared to be perſons of good ſenſe, liſtening to him with an air that expreſſed the utmoſt ſatisfaction. 'Is it poſſible,' ſaid I to myſelf, 'that the tenderneſs of a pa-'rent ſhould degenerate into ſuch a 'criminal fondneſs, as to make them 'delight in the folly of their off-'ſpring? What an extravagant weak-'neſs for a reaſonable mind to ſuffer 'itſelf to be ſo groſsly blinded, as to 'miſtake blemiſhes for beauties! What 'ſervice can ſuch a man be of to his 'friend or his country, who knows no 'gratification ſuperior to following a 'hare, or running down a fox; and 'who is, in all reſpects, as worthleſs 'an animal as thoſe who engroſs all 'his attention?' We had ſat an hour without any of us having an opportunity of putting in a word; and were riſing, when he ſtopped to take a little breath. 'I am glad, Sir,' ſaid Valville, 'that you have had ſuch good di-'verſion to-day: hunting is a noble 'exerciſe, and much conducive to the 'promotion of health; but, ſure, it 'ought not to be our ſupreme felicity.'—'Sir,' ſaid the old gentleman, 'my 'boy is fond of the chace; and is one 'of the beſt huntſmen in the country: 'and

'and when he begins upon theſe ſubjects, he is apt to be a little tedious; 'but I love to hear him talk of them; 'though I wiſh he did not ſwear ſo 'much.'—'I wiſh ſo too, Sir,' ſaid I: 'theſe are only uſeleſs blanks in diſcourſe; and if they had been left out, 'all that has been ſaid would have 'been reduced into about half the compaſs.—And I aſſure you, Sir,' added I, addreſſing myſelf to the young gentleman, 'I am almoſt angry that you 'ſhould believe you have ſo little credit 'with us, as to think it neceſſary to 'ſwear to every trifling particular. 'But, however, a torrent of common-'place execrations may certainly be of 'great ſervice to perſons who have ſo 'mean a genius as to want ſuch uſeleſs 'explicatives to diſguiſe their want of 'ideas, and hide their inability to furniſh out a diſcourſe without them: 'but pray, Sir, do not imagine I 'think you one of this number.'—'Madam, I beg your pardon; I beg 'your pardon!' cried he: 'though, 'faith, I hardly know what you mean 'by your ablitives and ideots!—But I 'heard a rare ſtory to-day, father, of 'a gentleman at Paris, who is main 'rich; and yet is ſuch a fool as to think 'of marrying a pretty, vagabond girl. 'Lord! what ſapſculls there are in the 'world! Zoons! had he but half my 'ſenſe, I know what I know!—But, 'mayhap, you may know them, Ma-'dam,' added he, addreſſing himſelf to Mrs. Dorſin: 'the young fellow's 'name is Valville; and the wench I 'ſpeak of, I think they call Mari-'anne.' Here I ſaw Valville knit his brows, and look upon him with an air of contempt; whilſt I could not help bluſhing: but my relation to the officer no ſooner entered my thoughts, than I recovered myſelf from my confuſion. 'What do you mean, Sir?' cried Mrs. Dorſin, interrupting him. 'Mr. De 'Valville is a gentleman, who would 'have ſenſe enough to deſpiſe your 'cenſure, were the young lady deſti-'tute of a fortune: but ſhe is not ſo; I 'know her family; ſhe is a perſon of 'quality; and is related to ſome of my 'moſt intimate friends; and Valville, 'though of noble extraction, I aſſure 'you, will be greatly honoured by the 'alliance.' This was ſpoke with ſuch an air of aſſurance, that Valville, who ſtill knew nothing of the diſcovery of my birth, could not help ſmiling, and giving me a look which told me he approved of the deceit he thought Mrs. Dorſin put upon them. 'If my ſon 'has been miſinformed, Madam,' ſaid the old lady, 'you muſt excuſe him: I 'have heard ſomething myſelf of the 'ſame ſtory before; but as I did not 'know the perſons concerned, I could 'not contradict it. There is little credit 'to be given to report.'—'It is true, 'Madam,' returned Mrs. Dorſin: 'I 'aſſure you they are both perſons of 'merit; and are every way worthy of 'each other.'

But I forgot to mention the two young ladies, who were perſons of very different characters: they entered the room while their brother was in the midſt of his tedious diſcourſe, leaping ditches and five-barred gates. The youngeſt, who was about ſeventeen, ſeemed the favourite of her father and mother; was naturally genteel, and would have appeared quite charming, had not her whole behaviour been diſcoloured by the moſt ridiculous affectation and folly, which was ſo viſible as to deſtroy all the impreſſions which her beauty was apt to make upon thoſe who ſaw her. She no ſooner ſaluted us but ſhe ſat down by her father, who gave her a look full of tenderneſs: ſhe immediately began to endeavour to attract our eyes, and eſpecially Valville's, by fluttering and gallanting her fan, and every moment changing her poſture to diſcover ſome new charm. While her brother was talking, ſhe had frequently an opportunity of ſhewing a fine ſet of teeth by burſting into a ridiculous and immoderate laughter; then threw herſelf back in her chair; recovered herſelf, and adjuſted her tucker and head-dreſs, to diſcover a delicate, round, white arm; afterwards pulled out a gold ſnuff-box ſet with diamonds, and then looked at her watch: her whole behaviour was forced and full of affectation; and it was this that made all her actions diſagreeable; endeavouring, too viſibly, to give a grace to every charm, her very endeavour rendered her leſs charming, and her too eager deſire of pleaſing made her even diſagreeable.

The other lady was much older than her ſiſter; had a complexion very ordinary, and was a little crooked; but had an air ſo eaſy, ſo ſweet, and engaging,

gaging, that it more than made up for the want of those charms her sister was possessed of: she appeared to have a great degree of wit and good sense; but received none of those kind glances which were continually bestowed upon her brother and sister, who seemed to engross the whole souls of their parents; while her looks seemed to discover the modest diffidence of a pure and virtuous mind, depressed and labouring under insuperable difficulties; and it was easy to perceive that, as a criminal indulgence had spoiled the others, a contrary behaviour to her had made her ambitious of excelling them in real excellence, as much as they did her in the advantages of their persons. She entered the room dressed rather like a servant than the sister of the other lady; and, after saluting us with a very good grace, retired to the farther end of the room, where I could perceive her frequently blush, and seem in confusion at her brother's impertinence. I was soon prepossessed in her favour; and would have been very glad to have enjoyed her company, could I have hoped to obtain it without being troubled with that of her brother and sister.

As we rose up to go, the old gentleman and lady pressed us to stay supper; but, as we were so far from home, we begged to be excused: when, after exchanging some compliments, and entreating them to return our visit at Paris, we took our leave. We were no sooner seated in the coach, than Mrs. Dorsin cried—'How dreadful are the 'effects of a wrong education! A gentleman, with no other ideas than 'those of a peasant, is unworthy of 'the honours to which he is born. 'This young man will have a great 'estate; but his happiness must be 'confined in a narrow compass: while 'his mind is shut to every great and 'noble idea, he has no taste for rational pleasures; neither wisdom, the 'sweet delights of friendship, nor the 'godlike pleasures of virtue, can have 'any charms for him.'—'It is true, 'Madam,' rejoined Valville. 'What 'a vast difference must there be in the 'happiness of the virtuoso, who spends 'his life in the study of those sciences 'which enlarge the mind by a continual accession of new and great ideas; 'what a vast disproportion, I say, be-'tween such a one and the man whose 'views and satisfactions are all con-'fined to the dull round of sensual en-'joyments! Can he be happy who has 'no other felicity than what his dogs, 'his horses, and his bottle, give him? 'His hounds rival him in the chace; 'and, perhaps, are sensible of more 'pleasure in the pursuit of their game 'than their master; while every brook 'affords them a liquor as agreeable to 'their taste, and with which they can 'sate their thirst with as high a satis-'faction, as he with his richest wines. 'What a noble taste must that man 'have who consents to forsake the di-'vine pleasures, of which his nature 'is capable of, to share only in the de-'lights of his beagles and his horses?' —'But, Sir,' said I, smiling, 'what-'ever pains men take to deprave their 'natures, I am persuaded that, was the 'outward form to degenerate in pro-'portion as the mind did so, we should 'have few, or none, that would con-'sent to change their form to be any 'other animal under the sun: they are 'content with being brutes while they 'preserve the outside of the man, 'though they are as really so as if the 'form was changed too; for, banish 'reason, and give the man canine in-'clinations, and what is he but a dog 'in masquerade?'—'No, no,' said Mr. De Valville, laughing; 'I think 'you carry it a little too far now: 'while he is conscious that he has rea-'son, though he suffer it to lie dor-'mant, he is a man still; though he 'makes no use of his intellectual pow-'ers, but lets them lie by till they are 'so rusty that they can be of little ser-'vice to him, they are enough to con-'stitute him, in some measure, a rea-'sonable being.—But how do you like 'the young ladies, Madam?' added he, addressing himself to Mrs. Dorsin. 'I sincerely pity them both,' said she: 'the eldest, though shamefully disre-'garded by her father and mother, is 'a very deserving woman; and wants 'nothing but a more favourable out-'side to render her every way charm-'ing. I am sorry to see persons of 'good sense have such a partiality for 'their children; for nothing can be of 'worse consequence: the cultivation 'of young minds,' added she, 'is a 'most important task. Just ideas

'ought

'ought to be inſtilled as ſoon as the 'mind is capable of receiving them: 'when the tender faculties begin to 'open and expand themſelves, they 'ſhould begin to feel the force of that 'truth which ought to be the rule of 'their after-conduct. And how de-'lightful muſt it be for the young ſoul, 'in proportion as it ripens, to find it-'ſelf continually entertained with the 'proſpect of new and pleaſing ideas! 'On the contrary, the time for im-'provement is commonly trifled away; 'the fond parent is afraid to give his 'favourite child the trouble of think-'ing, leſt it ſhould damp it's vivacity: 'it's little follies take up all his atten-'tion; while flattery, and an unjuſt 'applauſe, lay the ſeeds of innumera-'ble vices, which ſpring up as ſoon as 'he arrives to manhood. On the 'other hand, the ſtern and inexorable 'parent damps the aſpiring thoughts, 'depreſſes the mind, and makes it too 'often averſe to improvement; ſince 'it is taught to regard the acquiſition 'of knowledge as a moſt painful taſk. 'It is for your ſake, Mr. De Valville,' continued ſhe, ſmiling, 'that I make 'theſe reflections; you may ſoon know 'what it is to be a father, and then 'ſuch obſervations may be uſeful to 'you: and I know you will excuſe me 'if I add one word more; and that 'is, that we ſhould never give chil-'dren any ideas but ſuch as they are ca-'pable of underſtanding with the great-'eſt eaſe; we ſhould encourage their 'enquiries, regard the pretty little 'creatures as our friends; and never 'uſe them with ſeverity, while it is 'poſſible to work upon them by the 'gentler methods of tenderneſs and 'affection. But let us break off this 'ſubject.—I think, Marianne, I ought 'to thank you for your reproving the 'young gentleman ſo ſmartly: I was 'extremely pleaſed with your manner 'of doing it; though I was afraid he 'would have been affronted. It is 'very unbecoming a gentleman, who 'ought to be acquainted with the pro-'priety of characters, to uſe, with a 'wanton freedom, the name of that 'tremendous Being who ſupports the 'fabrick of the univerſe. How im-'pious for man to jeſt with Omnipo-'tence, and call him to be a witneſs 'of their actions, even in the midſt of 'a debauch!'

Theſe, with other diſcourſes, paſſed away the time till we got home; when we were told that the officer, attended by an elderly gentleman, had waited for us ſome time, but, being fatigued with their journey, were gone home, and had left word that they would return the next day before dinner. I was ſo diſturbed at our being out of the way, that it was with difficulty I concealed my uneaſineſs. I longed to know the ſucceſs of his journey, and what news he brought from the village where I had ſpent ſo many years. I longed to thank this dear friend for all the trouble he had given himſelf on my account; to embrace him, and call him my uncle. While we were at ſupper, Valville obſerved that I was more thoughtful than uſual, but aſcribed it to my being fatigued with my journey; and upon that account ſoon left me, that I might be at liberty to repoſe myſelf.

The next morning I aroſe ſooner than ordinary, dreſſed myſelf before breakfaſt, and ſent a footman to acquaint the officer that we ſhould be glad to ſee him; but the ſervant had not been gone many minutes, when I heard my uncle ſpeak to Mrs. Dorſin, whom he met coming down ſtairs; and immediately after he opened the door. I was then reading his letter; but threw it down, and aroſe to meet him: when advancing haſtily to me—'O my niece!' cried he, taking me in his arms, and embracing me, 'thou dear remains of my loſt 'brother!' This tender exclamation at firſt ſoftened me to ſuch a degree, that I was unable to ſpeak to him. At laſt, recovering myſelf—'Dear Sir,' cried I, looking upon him with a tender kind of pleaſure, 'you are the firſt, the only 'perſon I know of my kindred. How 'happy do I think myſelf in being re-'lated to you!' While I was ſpeaking, I heard Mrs. Dorſin and another perſon coming in: but how great, how inexpreſſible was my ſurprize, when, lifting up my eyes, and looking over my uncle's ſhoulder, I ſaw a perſon whom I had long before thought dead; my dear friend, my indulgent parent, Mr. De Roſand! I ſtarted, gave a ſhriek, ſtood motionleſs, while a flood of tender ideas flowed into my mind. My uncle, meanwhile, retired a few ſteps, and Mr. De Roſand held me in his arms, while joy tied both our tongues. At laſt he cried out—'Oh, my child!'

Here

Here the tears trickled down his aged cheeks, and he was too full to ſay any more: 'Oh, my father!' then cried I, and ſtopped too; claſped my arms about him; the tears guſhed from my eyes, which, while he kiſſed me, mingled with his. Sure there never was a more tender interview! What a pleaſing, painful tranſport! Our minds, Madam, are capable of receiving only a certain degree of pleaſure; and all beyond that is pain. Our paſſions are confuſed ſenſations, which, when violent, ſwell the heart; it's emotions become turbulent, and the exceſs of our delight we find nearly allied to pain. At laſt, after recollecting himſelf, and giving me a moſt tender look—'Never! never ſince 'my ſiſter's death,' cried he, 'have I 'hoped to ſee thee again! How afflict-'ed have I been on thy account! I have 'had a thouſand fears leſt thou ſhouldſt 'be reduced to ſtraits dangerous to thy 'virtue; I feared thou wouldſt be pre-'vailed upon to blot thy innocence by 'ſome unworthy action: but I thank 'God my fears were vain. Thou haſt 'not diſgraced the education I have 'given thee. This worthy gentleman 'has given me the hiſtory of thy beha-'viour in town: I heard the pleaſing 'ſtory with a father's tenderneſs. I 'rejoice in thy innocence; and congra-'tulate thee upon thy preſent happineſs, 'the pleaſing fruit of it. But oh, my 'dear! how couldſt thou forget me, ſo 'as not to let me hear from thee all this 'while? Indeed, that was unkind: but 'thou didſt not know, perhaps, how 'very dear thou wert to me. Not 'know that, did I ſay? Sure thou didſt. 'I have given thee ſuch proofs of my 'tenderneſs, as muſt make thee fully 'ſenſible of it.'—'Pray, dear Sir,' cried I, 'do not wound my ſoul with the 'ſuſpicion that I could be ſo ungrateful 'as to forget you, who, indeed, have 'been a ſecond father to me. I thought 'you had long ago left this world; 'for the laſt letter you ſent to Mrs. De 'Roſand, which acquainted me with 'the dreadful news of your fall, and 'the loſs of your benefice, told us, 'that a few days were the utmoſt you 'could expect to live. I lamented 'your loſs, at the ſame time that I did 'that of her. Lord! in what a dread-'ful grief was I involved! no words 'can expreſs my diſtreſs. You had, be-'ſides, been obliged to quit your houſe; 'and, as I knew not where to direct to 'you, the meſſenger I ſent came back 'without being able to learn where to 'find you, or ſo much as knowing whe-'ther you were alive or not: this, join-'ed to my thinking that ſo worthy a 'man could not be ſo much concealed, 'made me conclude that you were no 'more. But, O Sir! with what joy do 'I ſee that I was miſtaken! my tran-'ſports are quite inſupportable!'

Here I dried my eyes; and, looking round, obſerved my uncle and Mrs. Dorſin bathed in tears. I found myſelf very weak; the ſudden flow of ſpirits occaſioned by this unexpected interview made me almoſt ready to faint: I therefore ſat down, and endeavoured to compoſe myſelf; Mr. De Roſand took a chair, and ſat by me; when Mrs. Dorſin interrupted our converſation, by expreſſing the ſatisfaction ſhe found in having an opportunity of thanking Mr. De Roſand for his affection to me: and even diſcovered ſuch a lively and warm gratitude, that you would have thought ſhe alone had been the perſon obliged. 'Your generoſity and affection for my 'dear friend,' ſaid ſhe, 'is ſo very ex-'traordinary, that I cannot help re-'garding you as a perſon who has a 'peculiar right to my eſteem and friend-'ſhip. You have been doubly a fa-'ther to her; ſince, without being 'obliged to protect her, or concern 'yourſelf in her affairs, you have diſ-'charged all the duties of a parent. It 'is now our turn to let you ſee that we 'acknowledge theſe benefits, though 'we can never repay them. I hope, 'Sir,' added ſhe, 'you will do me the 'favour to accept of my houſe till Ma-'rianne is married: I ſhall eſteem this 'as a farther obligation.'—'I am 'greatly obliged to you, Madam,' returned he, 'for the honour you do me; 'but I have already given my word to 'this gentleman.'—'Yes, Madam,' returned my uncle, 'I have ordered a 'room to be fitted up for him: and as 'he is the preſerver of a noble branch 'of our family, I think I ought to 'take him under my care. My dear 'niece, as you ſay, is infinitely more 'obliged to this gentleman than even 'to my brother: he only brought her 'into being; but this worthy man has 'made that being a bleſſing to her, by 'embelliſhing her mind with all that 'is great, noble, and generous. Without

'his care, my niece would either have 'periſhed, or wanted thoſe improve-'ments which now make us rejoice in 'her alliance.—I therefore think my-'ſelf obliged to give him that ſupport 'which he has given you, my dear,' added he, looking at me. 'Sir,' ſaid I, returning him a look full of grati-tude, 'I thank you: you have not only, 'by your induſtrious and ardent zeal 'for my happineſs, placed me in a rank 'to which my higheſt ambition could 'never aſpire, but have, as it were, 'raiſed from the dead a gentleman on 'whom my moſt early affections were 'placed, and for whoſe ſuppoſed death 'I have ſhed many tears. He, Sir, 'ſhall be my care: I will ſtill pay him 'all that reſpect which is due from a 'daughter to the moſt worthy and beſt 'of parents. He ſhall live with Val-'ville and I, as with a ſon and daugh-'ter; whilſt I ſhall ever pray that his 'life may be preſerved as a bleſſing to 'us all.'—'Ah, my dear!' cried Mr. De Roſand, with a mixture of joy and tenderneſs in his looks; 'to ſee thee thus 'is a ſufficient reward for all my pains, 'my care, and concern for thee. I have 'no ambition for the glittering ho-'nours of this life, and muſt ſoon think 'of leaving it; but while I do live, 'methinks I ſhould deſire it ſhould be 'with thee. But, perhaps, Mr. De Val-'ville will be unwilling to admit me 'into his family; young men have little 'reſpect for grey hairs: and I may, 'perhaps, be looked upon as an intrud-'er.'—'No, Sir,' cried I, interrupt-ing him haſtily, 'Valville is already 'too well acquainted with your merit 'not to eſteem your company as a very 'great bleſſing; beſides, his tenderneſs 'to me muſt inſpire him with the moſt 'grateful ſentiments for you: but I 'thought, Sir,' added I, ſmiling, 'that 'you had too good an opinion of my 'diſcernment, to think I would marry 'a man who could look coolly upon a 'friend to whom I am under ſuch obli-'gations.'—'Indeed, Sir,' returned Mrs. Dorſin with a frank air, 'you 'will have no reaſon to complain of Mr. 'De Valville. But muſt my friend here 'engroſs all your attention? I aſſure you 'I have a very great deſire to have a 'ſhare in your eſteem; and muſt expect 'that you would think yourſelf as wel-'come a gueſt here as even Marianne; 'ſince it is to you that I am indebted for 'having her; and to you ſhe is indebt-'ed for herſelf; you have transferred 'to her your own goodneſs, your own 'great and generous ideas: and in giv-'ing her yourſelf, you have conferred 'not only upon her, but upon us, the 'greateſt benefit; a benefit which will, 'I hope, be extended to perſons yet un-'born.'—'I am at a loſs, Madam,' returned Mr. De Roſand, 'to make a 'reply to ſo many compliments: all 'that I can ſay is, that I am as much 'charmed with your tenderneſs to my 'dear child (for I cannot help calling 'her ſo) as I am with your goodneſs to 'me.'—'Pray, Sir,' returned Mrs. Dorſin, with a ſmile, 'let us have no 'more ceremony; friendſhip is a ſtran-'ger to it.—Sir,' added ſhe, turning to my uncle, 'I long to know what ſuc-ceſs you have had in your journey: 'will you favour us with a particular 'recital of what paſſed ſince you ho-'noured us with your letter? I hope 'you have made ſome new diſcovery 'that will effectually clear up this af-'fair.'—'Yes, Madam,' returned he, 'I have ſo. When I arrived at the 'village where Marianne had ſpent the 'firſt part of her life, I made it my bu-'ſineſs to wait upon thoſe gentlemen 'who had been Mr. De Roſand's 'friends, and from them I hoped to 'get ſome circumſtances that might be 'ſufficient to clear up every doubt; but 'they could tell me no more than I had 'already been acquainted with: at laſt 'I was informed that this gentleman, 'who was generally thought to have 'been dead, was retired to a noble-'man's houſe at a ſmall diſtance from 'thence, where he lived a private and 'retired life. I immediately went to 'him, told him the ſituation Marianne 'was in, and the buſineſs which brought 'me thither; a piece of news which he 'could not receive without rapture. 'He ſhewed me a writing drawn up by 'a ſcrivener, which related all the par-ticulars of her being found in the 'coach, with ſome circumſtances that 'I had not then been acquainted with; 'and this was dated but ſix days after 'the date of my brother's letter, which 'told me of his deſign to retire. I 'made ſtrict enquiry after the canon of 'Sens, who had eſcaped being mur-dered with the reſt, and had ſaved 'himſelf by flight. In ſhort, I found 'him. He told me that the gentleman

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'and lady were the parents of the 'child; that he had learnt from them 'that they were obliged to leave the 'country, and had therefore conceal-'ed their names, and aſſumed thoſe of 'foreigners. This he learnt through 'the indiſcretion of one of the foot-'men, whom he heard inadvertently 'call him by his title; the count ſeem-'ed a little angry; and to prevent his 'ſuſpecting his being guilty of any 'unworthy action, gave him an ac-'count of his reaſons for concealing 'his name and quality; but, however, 'without letting him know who he 'was. But what puts it beyond all 'doubt is, that this account of his 'reaſons for retiring exactly corre-'ſponds with what I received from my 'brother. The preſent count can make 'no exception to proofs like theſe, and 'therefore propoſes to give up the 'eſtate, which would have been his 'had his brother died without iſſue—'but he hopes that, as he is obliged to 'ſupport the dignity of his title, and 'I will add, as he has conſtantly ex-'erted himſelf in liberally ſupporting 'the indigent, and been a friend to the 'diſtreſſed by an unbounded munifi-'cence, you will not, my dear niece, 'inſiſt upon his returning more than 'half of what he has received as his 'brother's heir; ſince he is not able to 'do it without involving himſelf in 'inſuperable difficulties. You will ſee 'him to-day; he comes to congratu-'late you, and join in the general joy. 'I have provided an entertainment for 'you and Mr. De Valville—and I hope, 'Madam,' added he, looking at Mrs. Dorſin, 'that we ſhall not be without 'your company; for I imagine there 'will be a ſcene that will be more than 'a little diverting, as I have engaged 'moſt of Mr. De Valville's friends to 'be with us, that my niece may tri-'umph over their inſolence and ill-na-'ture.'—'Sir,' returned I, 'you muſt 'excuſe me if I am at a loſs for words 'to thank you: the gratitude that 'ſwells my heart is too big for utter-'ance. As to the count,' continued I, 'I rejoice that he has laid out the pro-'duce of my father's eſtate to ſuch great 'advantage; and am ſorry that he will 'be the poorer for knowing his niece: 'I will therefore do more than he re-'quires. But why, Sir, will you give 'me the pain of introducing me into 'company that hates and deſpiſes me? 'I can diſpenſe with giving them any 'confuſion, and have not the leaſt incli-'nation to triumph over their ill-nature: 'but, however, Sir, I will ſubmit my-'ſelf to your will, and chearfully con-'ſent to whatever you require.'—'Nay, 'my dear,' ſaid he, 'it is fit they 'ſhould all know their error as ſoon as 'poſſible, and this will give you an 'opportunity of letting them ſee that 'you can forgive the injuries they have 'offered you. Beſides, I long to hear 'how your lover will vindicate his 'choice, from your own intrinſick ex-'cellences, without the vain blandiſh-'ments of wealth and honour. This 'will ſhew that he is worthy of you, 'and that his heart is fixed on thoſe 'charms which will ever be your 'brighteſt ornament.'—'Well, Sir,' ſaid Mrs. Dorſin, 'I cannot help ap-'proving of your reaſons; Mr. De 'Valville has not the leaſt ſuſpicion of 'this happy diſcovery: but, if we muſt 'go with you, it is time to prepare for 'it; we ſhall ſoon be ready to wait up-'on you.—Gentlemen your ſervant. '—Come, my dear,' added ſhe, as we left the room together, 'a very little 'alteration in your dreſs will be ſuffi-'cient: I would have you appear to-'day as plain as poſſible, and without 'any other jewels than thoſe which 'nature and education have given you.' —'With all my heart, Madam,' re-turned I, and retired to my room, when in a few minutes I was ready to go; but as I returned to the dining-room, I ſaw Valville enter juſt before me. 'My dear,' ſaid he, turning to me, 'I heard you was one of the party in-'vited to this gentleman's houſe, and 'therefore have brought my coach 'for you.'—'Sir, I thank you,' re-turned I. 'But you muſt know this 'gentleman; it is Mr. De Roſand: 'you have heard me mention him.'— 'What! the perſon who has been ſuch 'a ſincere friend to you,' cried he, 'and to whom I am obliged for many 'of your charms!'—'Yes, Sir,' re-turned my uncle, 'this is the gentle-'man who has been a father to Miſs 'Marianne.'—'Then, Sir,' ſaid Val-ville, 'you muſt be a father to her ſtill: 'we thought you had been dead; but 'I rejoice to find that we were miſtak-'en. This is a very happy meeting; 'for I aſſure you you are very dear to

'Marianne; and I am ſure will not be 'leſs ſo to me. I have reaſon to look 'upon you as my beſt friend, ſince I 'receive a treaſure from you which I 'eſteem more than my life!' Here they embraced each other; and after ſome reciprocal proteſtations of friendſhip, Mrs. Dorſin being now ready, we all ſet out in my uncle's coach, and Valville ſent his own home.

We ſoon arrived at my uncle's; but, being told that but few of the company were come, and that they were in the garden, we propoſed to walk there too, and converſe till dinner-time. We were here entertained with ſeveral agreeable proſpects; and walked ſome time before we ſaw any of the perſons who came before us. At laſt, as we were rambling through a pleaſing kind of labyrinth, we ſaw, at a ſmall diſtance from us, the long meagre lady who had carried me from the convent: ſhe was talking very warmly to another of our ſex, whom I had never ſeen before; ſhe was much younger than the other lady, and had a countenance of a moſt ſatirical caſt. When ſhe laughed, there ſeemed to be a great deal of ill-nature hid under it; and a ſmile had the appearance of a moſt ſevere invective. Valville obſerved them firſt; and, turning to me, pointed to them; on which we ſtood ſtill to obſerve their geſtures, which appeared very extraordinary: they were ſo earneſtly engaged in converſation, that they had not the leiſure to look about them, and therefore did not ſee us; but walked ſlowly on, wholly taken up with their ſubject. When we had viewed them for ſome time, I propoſed to walk on; but we had no ſooner turned our backs, than we obſerved the old lady raiſe her voice, and cry out, in a haughty tone—'If 'ſhe is to be here, I am reſolved to affront her.'—'Nay, Madam,' replied the other, 'what end will that anſwer? 'I ſuppoſe ſhe is to dine with us?'—'Dine with us!' cried ſhe: 'ſhe dine 'with us! I hope Mr. De N——— 'does not intend to affront us! Dine 'with us! I ſay, dine with us too! 'What! oblige ladies of quality to 'dine with a girl that has been a ſervant at a little paltry linen-draper's! 'No, no! I will never ſubmit to that! 'She ſhall not dine with me!'—'Hold, 'Madam!' ſaid the other; 'ſhe is a 'lady of quality, you know: why, you 'cannot tell what an honour her alli-'ance may be to your family! She is 'certainly ſome princeſs!' This was ſpoke with a laugh more bitter and piercing than the keeneſt reproaches. However, I could not help thinking that I ſhould ſoon be revenged for the inſults they were offering me: and this thought, in ſpite of myſelf, gave me ſome pleaſure; and, indeed, I could not help indulging it. It was too agreeable to glance through my mind, on an occaſion like this, without giving me ſome emotion; eſpecially as this was the only comfort I then had to ſupport me. Valville, I obſerved, coloured a little, and ſeemed under ſome confuſion at this diſcourſe; but he had an air that expreſſed the utmoſt indignation, mixed with that noble pride, which ſwells the mind at the reflection of it's having done nothing unworthy of itſelf. My uncle, I obſerved, whiſpered to Mrs. Dorſin, and both ſmiled with an air of ſatisfaction; while Mr. De Roſand ſeemed the only unconcerned ſpectator, as he could not gueſs, from what was ſaid, who was the ſubject of their ſatire. We now thought it time to retire, ſince we found we were likely to be entertained with nothing but invectives. And as we began to turn into another walk, Mrs. Dorſin came up to me; and, whiſpering, deſired me not to be concerned. 'Your uncle,' ſaid ſhe, 'has ordered his ſervants to acquaint 'the gueſts, who are chiefly thoſe of 'Mr. De Valville's friends, and your 'moſt inveterate enemies, that you are 'to be here at dinner: and he is pleaſ-'ed to think how warmly he is likely 'to be attacked; but I do not doubt 'but he will bring himſelf off with ho-'nour.'—'I am ſorry,' returned I, 'that you have reſolved to give my 'dear Valville any uneaſineſs. I know 'he cannot bear to hear me uſed ill 'without pain: and ſure it is cruel to 'ſport with his affection to me; and to 'make that tenderneſs, upon which I 'found my happineſs, the cauſe of his 'inquietude. Indeed, I cannot help 'feeling for him all the uneaſineſs 'which I believe he will feel on my 'account: I wiſh he once knew who I 'am.'—'Have a little patience, my 'dear,' replied ſhe; 'Mr. De Valville 'will ſoon be acquainted with this

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'agreeable news; and the proofs he 'will now give you of his inviolable 'affection will afford you very agree-'able reflections.' We now took a turn down another walk, which led us to a painted alcove; where we sat down, and explained to Mr. De Rosand the conversation we had just heard, by giving him a particular account of my life at Paris: and, after sitting some time, walked in.

We found Mrs. De Fare, the old disagreeable lady, and her companion whom we had just seen in the garden, with several gentlemen, in the dining-room, who immediately rose as we went in; but as soon as they saw me, I observed several of them look upon me with an air of contempt, turn away their heads, and whisper to each other. We were no sooner seated, than the lady we had seen in the garden asked Mr. De Valville, with a sneer, when he was to be married to Miss Varthon. 'She is certainly,' said she, 'a most 'accomplished lady; and I hope they 'injure you very much who have the 'assurance to say that you are capable 'of being false to a lady of such ex-'traordinary merit, as well as fortune.' —'I do not dispute Miss Varthon's 'merit,' returned Valville with a smile; 'she may perhaps deserve a more 'worthy person than I am: but she 'was never formed to make me happy; 'and was I ever so much her humble 'servant, I should, perhaps, never be 'able to obtain her, as I shall pro-'bably never see her more. I shall 'therefore marry a lady whom I think, 'at least, of much greater merit; and 'who, in my opinion, has not only 'more charms than Miss Varthon, but 'than all her sex.'—'A lady!' cried the old spectre; 'a lady! No more of 'your ladies, I beseech you! You mean 'that forward slut there, whom I or-'dered to be carried to the prime-'minister's!—Pr'ythee, my girl,' added she, looking at me, 'hast thou the 'vanity to think thyself a match for a 'gentleman? Do not you think your-'self very happy in having such a 'cully? I know you think him a fool 'for having any thoughts of marrying 'you; do you not, now? Come, be 'plain; tell me what is your opinion 'of him?'—'I will, Madam, be plain, 'since you desire it,' returned I; 'and 'must therefore tell you, that I think 'him superior to your malice; and that 'he looks with as much contempt up-'on your spleen and ridiculous pride 'as I do. If I want an estate equal to 'his, I do not want those dispositions 'which will make me always strive to 'render him happy: this shall ever be 'the business of my life, and this the 'end of every action!' Here Valville gave me a glance which seemed to thank me for this tender declaration. 'How 'pert the little creature is!' cried she with a haughty, supercilious air. 'I 'would have you to know, that I ex-'pect to be treated with more respect! '—Valville, you ought to teach her to 'use her superiors in a manner more 'becoming her! But you are a foolish, 'giddy, young fellow; and are resolved 'to ruin yourself: this will be the con-'sequence of marrying this little ad-'venturer; remember I tell you so.'— 'Dear Madam,' returned Valville, 'do not be so hot; indeed, it does not 'become you; you will never be able 'to make me consult you in what con-'cerns my happiness: you may despise 'my dear Marianne as much as you 'please; we shall only laugh at your ill 'humours.'

Here a little old gentleman at the other end of the room, who had been looking at me very attentively through his glass, desired he might be permitted to speak. He had a countenance dry and formal; had hollow jaws, and no teeth; was dressed in a thread-bare velvet coat, which had been many years out of fashion, and seemed to have been made in the days of our ancestors, with the inside of the flap plentifully stuck with pins. After clearing his voice, blowing his nose, and taking some pains to prepare himself, he addressed himself to Mr. De Valville—'Young 'man,' said he, with a slow voice, 'you ought to consider that this good 'lady would not have been so desirous 'of hindering your marriage, did not 'she fear that you are about to ruin 'yourself, and throw a disgrace upon 'her family; and, for this reason, you 'ought to pardon her warmth. Pray, 'now, let me reason coolly with you. 'You are about to be guilty of an ac-'tion that, I am afraid, you will re-'pent of: consider, the girl, though she 'is pretty, has no money; or, how-'ever, but little in comparison of your 'estate. Now, was you prudent, you

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'might get a lady with a fortune of 'many thouſand livres a year—aye, 'many thouſand livres! Conſider 'that! And is not ſuch a treaſure more 'valuable than all the beauty in the 'world? Is beauty or virtue, or any 'of your imaginary fine romantick 'qualifications, an equivalent for her 'want of money? Conſider, Sir, you 'may have a large family; and then 'will theſe trifles give fortunes to your 'children? No, no! when you are as 'old as I am, you will regard money 'as the only bleſſing of life! Your ex-'pences, as ſoon as you are married, 'will increaſe; and that girl, though 'ſhe brings you little or nothing to 'ſupport them, will expect to live in 'as ſplendid a manner as if ſhe had 'brought you an eſtate of fifty thou-'ſand livres a year.'

All this while he had one of his hands in his waiſtcoat-pocket; and at every word I heard chink, chink: for there ſeemed to be ſuch a connection between his thoughts and the ſubject of them, that he could not talk of one without fingering the other.

Valville could not help ſmiling at the old miſer's diſcourſe. 'Sir,' returned he, 'your ſentiments and mine are very 'different: I have no ambition to hoard 'up heaps of uſeleſs treaſure. I marry 'to be happy; and to be bleſſed in the 'poſſeſſion of a woman whoſe conſum-'mate goodneſs will ſweeten all the 'unavoidable cares of life, and who 'will be to me a more valuable pur-'chaſe than all the treaſures of the 'earth. I am rich enough, and have 'an eſtate much greater than all our 'wants; an eſtate that will render my 'children as happy as wealth can make 'them; ſince, ſhould I have a nume-'rous offspring, it will place them all 'above the cares of life: and I could 'only wiſh to have more, that I might 'be able to render my fellow-creatures 'more happy. Of what advantage is 'wealth, if I have not a heart to make 'uſe of it? if the poor do not bleſs me 'for taſting the fruit of it; and the 'dejected honeſt man has not his anxi-'eties removed? While I have enough 'to render myſelf and my poſterity 'eaſy, and to make the drooping heart 'exult in tranſports of joy, I ſhall 'think myſelf rich enough.'—'Well, 'Sir,' cried the long meagre relation, 'pray how long will this generous fit 'laſt? It will not be long before you 'will think all this ſtuff, mere rant, 'and extravagant nonſenſe: you will 'call yourſelf fool for not taking our 'advice, and upbraid this pretty an-'gelick creature for her want of a for-'tune; aye, and give her the moſt bit-'ter curſes, too, for her hindering your 'preferment! Who, do you think, will 'keep you company? Who, do you 'think, will own this girl, this diſ-'grace to our family, for a relation? 'Have you ſtupidity enough to be in-'ſenſible to all the ſlights that will be 'put upon you by your relations, your 'friends, through the means of that 'little impertinent huſſey; that——' 'Hold, Madam!' cried Valville, in-terrupting her; 'do not think you 'have a right thus publickly to vent 'your ſpleen againſt this charming 'creature; and to aſſume liberties 'equally repugnant to good manners 'and common ſenſe. I have told you 'already that I ſhall never aſk your 'advice, or deſire you to direct me 'where to fix my heart. As to my 'dear Marianne's being a diſgrace to 'our family, I ſhall only ſay that the 'beſt wiſh I can make you, is, that 'you may be like her; and I do not 'queſtion but, if I was ſo happy as to 'know her birth, I ſhould find myſelf 'greatly honoured by her alliance. 'Had ſhe, indeed, no other charms 'than thoſe of a moſt lovely perſon, I 'know I ſhould ſoon ceaſe to admire 'her; but her mind has beauties even 'more attractive than her form. On 'theſe I build all my hopes of feli-'city; theſe will ever be the ſame, and 'render her charming even in old age. 'As to your being aſhamed to own 'her for a relation, I am not at all 'concerned about it: and, believe me, 'if there are any who call themſelves 'my friends that behave in the ſame 'manner, I ſhall look upon them with 'contempt, and think they only envy 'our happineſs; which, however, nei-'ther they nor you will ever be able to 'diſturb.'

Could any thing be more pleaſing at this time, Madam, than for me to re-ceive ſuch marks of my dear Valville's ſincerity and affection? My heart re-bounded with joy at the ſtrong aſſur-ances I received of his fidelity; and then melted into a pleaſing ſoftneſs; which, I dare ſay, he might eaſily read

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in my eyes. I did not, indeed, before queſtion the truth of his paſſion; nor could I admit a thought of his wanting thoſe tender ſentiments which I knew informed his ſoul: but yet this publick acknowledgment of his inviolable love, this viſible proof of his unſhaken conſtancy in the midſt of oppoſition, had ſomething extremely engaging in it; it gave me a new kind of delight, and made him then ſeem dearer to my heart than ever. The old miſer all this while ſeemed very attentive to the debate, and at every tender ſentiment ſhrugged up his ſhoulders and ſhook his head. Mrs. De Fare had not yet ſpoke one word, and by her looks ſeemed much at a loſs how to behave; whilſt moſt of the other company, methought, were inclined to declare themſelves in my favour. My uncle and Mrs. Dorſin appeared reſolved to ſtand neuter; and had only by their ſmiles, and ſome looks which expreſſed a kind of applauſe, encouraged Valville: but Mr. De Roſand, who more nearly felt the reproaches which were caſt upon me, could hardly tell how to ſtifle his reſentment; he frequently coloured, bit his lips, and ſeemed to ſtruggle with himſelf to keep his temper, and preſerve ſilence. But to proceed.

Valville had no ſooner made this tender reply to the diſagreeable old lady his relation, than her companion, with an ironical laugh, caſt her eyes upon him. 'La, Sir!' cried ſhe, 'how mighty 'prettily you talk! Why, all this is 'very heroick! Bleſs me! I thought I 'had heard Oroondates and Statira! 'How charmingly romantick you are! 'Come, pray, let us have ſome more 'of your flights; for, really, they are 'very diverting. You ought now to 'turn to your fair goddeſs; tell her 'that her divine beauties alone could 'captivate your heart; and, like a true 'inamorato, aſſure her, that one ſmile 'from her will glorioufly reward you 'for all the ſcorn, inſult, and reproach, 'you can ſuffer for her ſake; and that 'you will eſteem yourſelf too happy if 'ſhe will permit you to die at her feet!' This was uttered with ſuch a comical air, that even Valville could not help ſmiling. 'Madam,' returned he, 'you 'may railly me as much as you pleaſe; 'nothing that you can ſay will be able 'to make me think virtue, beauty, and 'fine ſenſe, ridiculous: my tenderneſs 'is founded on reaſon, ſince it is only 'a love of what is, in it's own nature, 'moſt lovely. I do not raiſe my expectations to any extravagant heights; 'nor form any ideas of my dear Marianne which all who know her will 'not allow ſhe deſerves.—This lady—'theſe gentlemen,' added he, turning to Mrs. Dorſin, my uncle, and Mr. De Roſand, 'will do me the juſtice to ſay 'that ſhe deſerves all I have ſaid of 'her; and that ſhe has even a mind 'more amiable than I have repreſented 'it.'—'Well, enough, enough!' cried the old lady; 'I am ſick of this ful'ſome ſtuff! If you will ruin yourſelf, 'I cannot help it; I have done my endeavour to prevent it: all that vexes 'me is, that your family muſt be diſgraced; you ought to have regard to 'that; and to conſider that you have 'no right to make us ſuffer for your 'follies. Had you taken her into 'keeping, and ſpent your whole eſtate 'upon her, I ſhould not have troubled 'myſelf about it: but to pretend to 'marry a vagabond, an orphan, I have 'not patience to think of it! and no'body but ſuch a ſilly coxcomb as you 'would ever behave thus!' While ſhe was railing in this manner, we were deſired to walk into the next room, and were told that dinner was upon table. We all went immediately; but, as we were taking our ſeats, this lady called to my uncle—'Sir,' ſaid ſhe, leaning upon the back of her chair, 'do you 'propoſe to ſuffer that little impertinent girl to dine with perſons of 'quality?'—'Who do you mean, Ma'dam?' returned he: 'there is no'body here that deſerves that character.'—'Who do I mean! who ſhould 'I mean but Marianne?' replied ſhe. 'I hope you have not invited us here 'to affront us; I will not ſit down to 'the ſame table with her, I tell you: 'no! I will never ſtoop ſo low as to 'put myſelf upon a level with ſuch a 'creature!'—'Well, Madam,' returned he, ſmiling, 'if you will not ſit 'down at this table, you ſhall ſit where 'you pleaſe; my houſe is at your ſervice.'—'What! I muſt dine by my'ſelf, then, muſt I?' cried ſhe, in a greater rage than ever. 'Pray, let 'ſomebody order my ſervants to get 'the coach ready! I thought, Sir, that

'you

'you had known the world better than 'to treat perſons of my rank with ſo 'much rudeneſs!'

While ſhe was ſpeaking theſe laſt words, the Count De V——— entered the room; and, after having whiſpered ſomething to his brother, who ſtood near the door, came forward, ſaluted the company, and embraced me with an air equally tender and polite. 'I 'do not think, Miſs,' ſaid he, as he approached me, 'that I can be miſ-'taken; you muſt be the lady my 'brother has ſo well deſcribed to me; 'and I am glad to find I have ſuch an 'amiable niece! Let me congratulate 'you upon your knowledge of the fa-'mily to which you belong; and beg, 'at the ſame time, that you would re-'gard me as a man who will always 'have your intereſt at heart: for, upon 'the fine encomiums my brother has 'given me of you, I am ambitious of 'joining the character of your friend 'to that of your uncle.'—'Sir, I need 'not tell you,' returned I, 'how much 'my vanity is flattered at the diſcovery 'that I ſpring from your noble fa-'mily: but, I aſſure you, I am more 'delighted at the thoughts of your's 'and your brother's worth, than at all 'the honours I can receive through 'your alliance. You will both find 'that I ſhall conſtantly behave to you 'with all that duty which might have 'been expected from me had I been al-'ways brought up in the knowledge 'of my near relation to you.'

You cannot imagine, Madam, what an odd groupe of figures were formed here in a moment! The tall meagre lady, who was got to the door, but ſtepped back to make way for the count to enter, turned her head, and ſtood all this while ſtiffened into a ſtatue; her mouth was open, and her hands lifted up in a poſture of amazement; her eyes ſtared wide open; and her brows, raiſed into a high arch, crouded her ſhrivelled fore-head into a confuſed heap of wrinkles; in ſhort, nothing could appear more groteſque. The old miſer leaning up-on the back of his chair, biting the nails of one hand, and with the other ſcratching his bald head; and thus, with his wig almoſt off, ſtood with his eyes fixed on the count and me: the ſatirical lady was immoveable too; and, with a mortified look, preſſed the extre-mity of her fan againſt her lips. Mrs. De Fare ſeemed as much aſtoniſhed as the reſt, but appeared leſs confuſed, and had an air that ſhewed ſhe was glad ſhe had not ventured to ſay any thing a-gainſt me; though her ſilence proceeded rather from Mr. De Valville's being preſent, than from any regard to me: in ſhort, all who did not know of this diſcovery had a geſture which expreſſed their aſtoniſhment. Valville, who ſtood cloſe to me, (for, Madam, I muſt not forget him) fixed his eyes upon me, and then caſt them on the ground, with a kind of tender confuſion, mixed with diffidence and ſurprize: while Mrs. Dorſin, Mr. De Roſand, and the offi-cer, ſmiled in a manner that expreſſed their inward ſatisfaction.

While we were talking thus, my un-cle, the officer, put us in mind that it would be more proper to defer all far-ther ceremony till after we had dined, ſince the dinner would ſoon be cold. 'Here are more perſons, brother,' ſaid he, 'that you muſt be acquainted 'with: but firſt ſit down to table.—This 'gentleman,' added he, looking at Mr. De Roſand, 'muſt be our chaplain.' On which he immediately ſaid grace, and we took our ſeats.

Here the old lady, compoſing her countenance, came to us with a diſor-dered air; when Mrs. Dorſin, giving her a look full of affability, deſired her to ſit down: ſhe did ſo; and the reſt of her friends followed her example. We were no ſooner ſeated, than I aſked how my grandmother, the counteſs-dowa-ger, did. 'She is well, Miſs,' ſaid the count, 'but too old to undertake 'ſuch a journey: ſhe longs to ſee you; 'and I have promiſed to take you with 'me to her to-morrow.'—'Sir,' re-turned I, 'I ſhall gladly attend you; 'and I aſſure you I have at leaſt as 'great a deſire to ſee her as ſhe can 'have to ſee me: I ſhall now be in-'formed with thoſe dear, thoſe ſocial 'affections, of which I have hitherto 'been deprived.' All this while Val-ville ſeemed wrapped in thought, and very uneaſy; which Mrs. Dorſin per-ceiving, aſked him, with a ſmile, how he did; and added—'We muſt beg 'pardon, Sir, for concealing circum-'ſtances from you in which you are ſo 'nearly concerned: Marianne is, in-'deed, the late Count De V———'s 'daughter, who was leaving France 'incognito, when he and the counteſs

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Plate VIII. Published as the Act directs, by Harrison & Co. Nov.r 20. 1784.

'were robbed and murdered; but you 'muſt not blame her for her reſerve, 'for ſhe is not at all in fault; our 'friend here has unravelled this af-'fair; and it was not till this morn-'ing that we were perfectly certain of 'the truth.' Here Valville ſighed; and was going to make anſwer, when Mrs. De Fare cried out—'Is it poſſi-'ble! Is this lady, indeed, a perſon 'of quality? Bleſs me! how have 'we been miſtaken!—May I hope that 'you will forgive me, Miſs?' added ſhe. 'Had I known who you were, I 'ſhould have treated you with more 'reſpect than I did when you was at 'my houſe. How glad am I that I 'have ſaid nothing here to your preju-'dice! My daughter will be overjoyed 'at this news: and how happy ſhall I 'think myſelf, if you will honour us 'with your friendſhip!—Well, but 'how did you make this wonderful 'diſcovery?' continued ſhe, addreſſing herſelf to Mrs. Dorſin. 'I really long 'to hear every particular: methinks 'the young lady has charms which I 'never obſerved before.—Why, Mr. 'De Valville, you will be vaſtly hap-'py; every body will envy your feli-'city.'—'Very true,' cried the lady who had been ſo ſatirical upon Valville and me: 'Miſs Varthon ought not to 'be brought in competition with this 'lovely creature; ſhe is pretty, indeed, 'but, then, ſhe is a moſt intolerable 'coquette. La! how could ſhe be ſo 'vain as to rival Miſs Marianne?—'Why, Mr. De Valville, I now think 'your commendations of this young 'lady fell very ſhort of what ſhe de-'ſerves: ſhe is infinitely more lovely 'than you have repreſented her. The 'Count DeV———'s daughter! Well, 'you muſt certainly be very happy. I 'have, upon my word, a mighty re-'ſpect for you both; and heartily wiſh 'you all imaginable joy.'

While they were running on in this manner, I could not help ſeriouſly reflecting on the inſtability of the human mind, and the ſtrong prejudices which moſt people indulge in favour of the glittering advantages of birth and fortune. 'Half an hour ago I was look-'ed upon with contempt,' ſaid I to myſelf, 'by thoſe very perſons who 'now endeavour to court me to a good 'opinion of them, by the moſt ridicu-'lous flattery, the groſſeſt adulation. 'Am I better than I was then? Have I 'more virtue, beauty, or wit? Have 'I one qualification to authorize this 'change? No. They find I am the 'daughter of a count; there lies the 'charm. Ye right honourable ſounds; 'ye vain blandiſhments, that dazzle 'weak eyes; what wondrous charm 'do you contain! Will you make me 'more wiſe, more virtuous, or more 'happy? Will you render me a more 'worthy friend, a better wife, or a 'more tender parent? Will you diſ-'perſe the care from my heart, when 'it is oppreſſed with grief? or have 'you the power to remove the ſlighteſt 'head-ache? No. What art thou, 'then, but a mere name, a breath of 'wind! And can a breath in a moment 'work ſuch a mighty change? But 'Valville's down-caſt looks tell me 'that all theſe honours give him no 'joy, and that he longs for an oppor-'tunity to open his heart to me.' Theſe reflections were interrupted by the old meagre lady's drinking to me; when, ſetting down her glaſs—'I have 'behaved too much like an enemy to 'you, Miſs,' cried ſhe, 'ever to hope 'that you will forgive me: however, 'when you conſider that all the injuries 'I have offered you have proceeded 'from a miſtaken opinion that you 'were of low birth, and from a regard 'to the honour of our family, as well 'as a concern for the happineſs of my 'couſin Valville, you may think that I 'might have ſome reaſon to oppoſe an 'alliance which to me appeared diſho-'nourable to us. However, I ſincerely 'beg your pardon; and hope you will 'forget what is paſt, ſince I am ſorry for 'and aſhamed of my behaviour.'—'Nay, Madam,' returned I, 'I do 'not think you have any reaſon to al-'ter your opinion of me; and can 'therefore diſpenſe with your ſhame 'and concern: I am the ſame perſon 'as I was when you treated me with 'ſuch contempt; and can lay no greater 'claim to your eſteem than I could 'then. The honour of a virtuous 'mind is derived from itſelf, and can 'receive no addition from the accident-'al advantages of birth or fortune; 'nor can the want of them render a 'perſon, truly valuable, worthy of re-'proach: however, Madam, I readily 'conſent to forgive your treatment of 'me, and all the uneaſineſs you have

'made me ſuffer, on condition that you 'mention it no more, and behave with 'the ſame freedom as if you had ever 'been my friend.'

As ſoon as dinner was over, Mr. De Roſand, the count, and the officer, joined in converſation; when I retired for a few minutes into another room: Mrs. Dorſin whiſpered Valville to follow me; he did ſo with a dejected look; took a chair, and ſat down by me; when, after a few moment's ſilence—'Ah, my dear 'Marianne!' cried he with a troubled voice, at the ſame time giving me a glance that at once expreſſed the diffidence, the anxiety, and tenderneſs, of a lover ſuſpended between hope and fear, 'what am I to expect? Have I not rea'ſon to be apprehenſive that this diſ'covery will ruin my hopes, and prove 'fatal to the repoſe of my life? While 'your birth was unknown to me, I 'loved you. Ah! with what tender'neſs I loved you! My paſſion can 'admit of no increaſe from the ho'nours to which you have now a claim. 'I am ſtill, ſtill the ſame; and muſt 'wiſh you had yet been ignorant of 'your birth, if that diſcovery can for 'a moment make me ſeem leſs worthy 'of ſharing your heart. May I hope 'I am yet as dear to you as ever?'—'Come, Sir, let me beg of you not to 'make me uneaſy by theſe unkind ſu'ſpicions,' returned I with a ſmile, at the ſame time giving him my hand: 'I rejoice that it is now in my power 'to offer you a fortune that will be 'worth your acceptance; and, was it 'ever ſo great, it ſhould be entirely at 'your diſpoſal, ſince you could be ſo 'generous as to think of marrying me 'without any. You will now be ſaved 'from the reproaches of your friends. 'Come, reſume your gaiety; and do 'not be ſo unjuſt as to injure my ten'derneſs.'—'O thou dear, lovely 'creature!' cried he, tenderly graſping my hand, 'how can I enough admire 'your goodneſs? Will nothing be able 'to take off your thoughts from me? 'Forgive my ſuſpicions; forgive the 'pain I have given myſelf by enter'taining ſuch cruel fears. O my dear 'charmer! I will now forget them all. 'This proof of your affection is infi'nitely more tranſporting than the con'ſideration of every other advantage I 'can poſſibly enjoy from the diſcovery 'of your birth and fortune. Love 'has left no room for ambition in my 'ſoul; no room for ſordid avarice: I am 'all tenderneſs; all delight and admi'ration!' While he ſpoke this, his cheeks glowed with pleaſure; and he caſt upon me a look the moſt tender and affectionate I ever beheld. 'Dear Sir,' returned I with anſwering looks of affection, 'I do not know how to blame 'you for your injuſtice to me, while 'the diſcovery of it gives you ſuch ſa'tisfaction. What a charming thing 'is love,' continued I, ſmiling, 'ſince 'it's very pains are ſucceeded by ſuch 'pleaſing tranſports! But I muſt 'thank you, Sir, for the engaging 'manner in which you have vindicated 'your affection to me while my birth 'was unknown to you, and while you 'thought me without relations or 'friends. It was, indeed, with ſome 'reluctance that I was brought over to 'conſent to your ſuffering ſuch a ſe'vere trial; but I cannot now repent of 'it, ſince it has given you an opportu'nity of diſcovering to the world upon 'what noble and generous principles 'you proceed: and I aſſure you I ſhall 'never think of this adventure but 'with pleaſure.'—'I am happy, in'deed, my dear,' returned he, 'if I 'have ſaid any thing that gives you 'pleaſure on reflection; this I could 'not have hoped for. What happineſs 'may I not expect from the poſſeſſion 'of a perſon who kindly conſiders all 'my actions in the beſt light!'—'Nay, 'Sir,' returned I, 'I ſhould have 'been highly pleaſed to have heard any 'other perſon vindicate himſelf in the 'ſame agreeable manner, though, per'haps, not equally ſo. If a confor'mity of ſentiment can render us hap'py, I may flatter myſelf that we ſhall 'enjoy as great a degree of felicity as 'is conſiſtent with human nature; if 'we do not, it muſt be our own faults. 'It is neceſſary, however, that we 'ſhould always preſerve that ſettled 'complacency which is needful to ſup'port a friendſhip which ought never 'to be interrupted: and, as it is im'poſſible that we ſhould always behave 'well, it is abſolutely neceſſary that 'we ſhould be ſometimes a little blind 'too to each other's imperfections. 'This is a rule which, I am ſure, you 'will have frequent occaſion to put in 'practice; though, I hope, upon the 'whole, I ſhall behave in ſuch a man-

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'ner as to gain your approbation.'—'Ah, my charmer!' replied he, 'I 'ſhall find but little need of this cau-'tion: you are incapable of an ill-in-'tention; and I muſt ſurely have too 'much complacency in you, my dear, 'or rather too much juſtice, to be of-'fended without it. I ſhall daily find 'in you freſh ſubject of admiration; 'your native ſweetneſs of temper will 'ſoothe my mind into an habitual 'calm, and preſerve me from being 'ruffled by the ordinary cares of life: 'one joy, one care, one pleaſure, will 'employ both our minds; while our 'only contention ſhall be who will, 'with the greateſt aſſiduity, promote 'each other's happineſs. Thus, when 'tired with the impertinence and folly 'of mankind, (for it is impoſſible that 'we ſhould be always in the moſt a-'greeable company) I ſhall return 'home to a friend, who will receive me 'with an open heart; into which, with 'an unreſtrained confidence, I can 'pour all my concerns; a friend, whoſe 'gaiety will divert my chagrin, and 'whoſe good ſenſe will inſpire me with 'a delightful tranquillity, and charm 'away every uneaſy thought.'—'I 'wiſh, Sir,' returned I, 'you would 'not carry your expectations to ſuch a 'viſionary height, for I am terribly afraid 'you will be diſappointed: methinks 'ſuch exquiſite happineſs is too much, 'my dear Valville, too much to be even 'hoped for.'—'Why ſo, my dear?' cried he, haſtily interrupting me. 'What can 'hinder us from being compleatly bleſ-'ſed, ſince we ſhall want nothing that can 'render us happy in ourſelves, and agree-'able to each other? A love of virtue, 'and the charms of that union which 'is founded on the ſame deſires, views, 'and intereſts, muſt render our conver-'ſations too agreeable for us to ſuffer 'any of thoſe dull intervals of life 'which are the puniſhments of moſt 'of thoſe who, from leſs laudable mo-'tives, enter into the marriage-ſtate.' —'But do you imagine, Sir,' returned I, 'that we ſhall meet with no rubs in 'life; that nothing will make us for-'get ourſelves? We are not always 'wiſe; and I am perſuaded we ſhall not 'always think ourſelves happy, unleſs 'we take a reſolution to be ſo in ſpite 'of all oppoſition: a thouſand little 'incidents may ſtart up and interrupt 'our mutual felicity; we ſhould there-'fore take a peculiar care not to be too 'much affected by trifles; for I have 'obſerved that the moſt inſignifi-'cant things commonly render peo-'ple unhappy, and create thoſe diſ-'guſts which muſt be attended by the 'moſt fatal conſequences. Here we 'are apt to be off our guard, and there-'fore loſe ourſelves before we are a-'ware; are loſt in a labyrinth of un-'governable paſſions, and involved in 'inquietudes which we ſhould never 'have experienced from the moſt rea-'ſonable cauſes of diſcontent: we 'need only, I believe, attend to this 'caution, to render us compleatly 'bleſſed, and as happy as the ſincereſt 'friendſhip, the tendereſt love, can 'make us. Your ſolidity and good 'ſenſe will put a reſtraint upon my 'levity; and my vivacity prevent the 'wiſer diſpoſition of your mind from 'degenerating into a muſty and un-'pleaſing gravity. But come, Sir,' added I, riſing, 'let us rejoin the compa-'ny; they will not thank us for being 'ſo rude as to leave them ſo long toge-'ther.' Valville endeavoured to per-ſuade me to ſtay a little longer, but I deſired him to excuſe me; and we im-mediately returned to them.

As we entered the room, I obſerved the old miſer liſtening very attentively to the count and his brother; and found that he was aſking them ſome queſtions relating to my fortune. They all aroſe as ſoon as they ſaw us; when Mrs. Dorſin, taking me by the hand—'You have been away a great while,' ſaid ſhe, ſmiling; 'and if I had known 'how long you would have deprived 'us of your company, I ſhould not, 'perhaps, have ſent Mr. De Valville 'after you: but, however, you are 'very excuſable; and we are not over-'fond of ceremony.—Well, Mr. De 'Valville,' added ſhe, 'how do you 'do now? I find Miſs Marianne has 'brought you to yourſelf; and we 'may hope to find you good company 'again: indeed, I was concerned to ſee 'you look ſo uneaſy.' Here the count took Valville by the hand—'I am glad, 'Sir,' ſaid he, 'that I am to have ſuch 'a worthy gentleman for my kinſ-'man: ſince you left us, Mrs. Dorſin 'and my brother have given me an ac-'count of your paſſion for my niece; 'and ſuch a character of you as makes 'me think her very happy in having

'placed her affections upon a perſon of 'ſo much merit.' Valville returned this compliment in a very handſome manner; when we ſat down, and entered into a general converſation.

But, perhaps, Madam, you may think theſe long diſcourſes quite impertinent; I ſhall therefore wave repeating any more of them for the preſent, and paſs on to ſome incidents which you may poſſibly find more diverting.

We ſpent the reſt of the day very agreeably; and the evening was concluded with a ball, which laſted till morning. Inſtead of jarring diſcord, ill-humour, and petulant remarks, we were now ſurrounded with nothing but mirth and gaiety; every thing paſt was forgotten; and we were, in a little time, as good friends as if we had never been enemies. But I muſt not forget to tell you that the old miſer, who had, I fancy, drank my health with a higher reliſh and larger draughts than the reſt, as, perhaps, wiſely conſidering that it was unneceſſary to uſe reſtraint when at another's expence, was reſolved to honour us with a dance; and though he could hardly hobble along without his cane, cut ſuch capers as gave us the greateſt diverſion, which we teſtified by applauſes that he ought rather to have looked upon as cenſures than commendations. The lady of the ſatirical caſt of mind was moſt maliciouſly profuſe of her praiſes; and extolled his agility and ſprightly vivacity in ſuch a ludicrous and extravagant manner, that, thinking her in earneſt, he imagined he was as young and agreeable as ever; and therefore, in the pride of his heart, reſolved once more to cut another caper. But, alas! how ſhort-lived is human glory! In the midſt of his performance, he unhappily took a falſe ſtep, overſet a ſide-board of glaſſes and ſweetmeats, and fell, with them, to the floor. The gentlemen ran to his aſſiſtance; whilſt, terrified at the dreadful craſh, he lay without ſenſe or motion: they helped him up, placed him in an elbow-chair, and took up his wig, which lay at ſome diſtance from him, whilſt we all condoled his misfortune. Mrs. Dorſin and I were at firſt really concerned for fear he had hurt himſelf; but that concern was ſoon diſſipated; for, after rubbing his ſhins, and making a thouſand wry faces, he recovered his breath; when we waited to hear him complain of his bruiſes: but how greatly were we ſurprized to hear him cry out, in a diſmal tone—'Oh, my poor ſilk ſtockings! 'they are ſtained; they are entirely 'ſpoiled: I have wore them, upon oc-'caſion, theſe ſeven years. Ah! what 'a misfortune! Had I but ſtaid at 'home——' 'But, Sir,' cried Mrs. Dorſin, interrupting him, 'your legs, 'your legs! How do they do?'—'My 'legs!' cried he. 'I ſhould not have 'cared for my legs, had not I ſtained 'my ſtockings: I do not mind bruiſ-'ing my legs; they will be well again; 'but my ſtockings—Ah, that con-'founded claret!' Here we ſtood looking at each other with amazement; when the ſatirical lady, lifting up her hands, cried out, with a very ſerious look—'What a dreadful cataſtrophe! 'The gentleman has ſtained his poor 'dear ſtockings with curſed claret; a 'loſs that can never be repaired! Had 'it been blood, inſtead of that perni-'cious liquor, I ſhould not have cared; 'then they might have been waſhed! 'Oh, the dear, dear ſtockings!' We could contain ourſelves no longer, but burſt into a general laugh; at which the poor miſer was ſo offended, that he took the firſt opportunity to retire, after having firſt deſired my uncle, the officer, to lend him his coach.

I might, poſſibly, Madam, make ſome very ſmart reflections upon this adventure, were I diſpoſed to it, ſince nothing in nature makes a more ridiculous figure than a perſon, bending under the weight of years, mimicking the gay and ſprightly airs of youth; but this was not, I believe, his natural character, ſince all his pretty, jaunty airs, were owing rather to the influence of an enlivening cup, than any ſettled diſpoſition: he ſeemed, indeed, to have no vice, but an inſatiable avarice; or rather, his avarice ſwallowed up and contained all his other vices. What a vile and infamous diſpoſition muſt that be which lays waſte the foundation of every virtue, ſtifles that moral ſenſe which is implanted in the heart of every good being, and renders the mind that is actuated by it the moſt compleatly wretched! What a ſordid pleaſure to look upon treaſures which it dares not uſe, and to glut the eyes with the ſight of what it can only enjoy by ſeeing!

ſeeing! Such a perſon may hug himſelf with the poor delight of enjoying what he dare not enjoy; for ſince riches are of no other uſe than to ſupply us with the neceſſaries and conveniences of life, we can only be ſaid to enjoy them when we make uſe of them.

Mr. De Roſand behaved, on this occaſion, in a manner agreeable to his character: he was chearful, and yet wiſe; his mirth was ſober and polite; and his good-humour and vivacity, far from making old age appear leſs venerable, gave it charms which commanded reſpect, at the ſame time that it inſpired with pleaſure. His joy was like the tranſports of a father exulting in the happineſs of his child: every paternal affection gladdened his heart, ſparkled in his eyes, and diffuſed over his whole perſon a ſatisfaction, a delight, a gaiety, truly parental.

The diſagreeable old lady, who now deſired to appear my friend, careſſed me in a manner peculiar to herſelf: ſhe was very liberal of her praiſes, and endeavoured, at the ſame time, to inſinuate herſelf into my eſteem by flattering my vanity, in letting me know the greatneſs of the family to which I was going to be united; which, indeed, was not much inferior to my own. She began with giving me a hiſtory of her family, with all the marriages and intermarriages into thoſe of the firſt quality: and, before we broke up, had informed me how many marſhals, conſtables, and other great officers, it had produced; circumſtances which Mrs. De Valville's modeſty had not permitted her to mention, and which her good ſenſe did not ſuffer her to lay any great ſtreſs upon; though this lady could not ſpeak of them without rapture, and betraying a ridiculous vanity which diſcovered itſelf in every word. Her friend, who had been ſo maliciouſly ſevere upon Valville and me, took another way to ingratiate herſelf into my favour, which ſhe, doubtleſs, thought would have proved an infallible one: ſhe aſſumed all the outſide appearance of friendſhip; ſhe conformed herſelf to all my words and actions; ſhe was always of my mind; ſmiled when I ſmiled; and when I was grave ſhe appeared ſerious; ſhe hung upon my looks; watched every motion; and even governed her wit by my glances, till I was heartily ſick of being thus ridiculouſly aped. In fine, they were now both changed to perſons of the moſt ſervile complaiſance. Thus the proud, when humbled, are the moſt obſequious, fawning creatures, in the univerſe.

You cannot imagine, Madam, how very diſagreeable theſe perſons made themſelves; or how much I was diſguſted at their nauſeous flattery and ridiculous attempts to pleaſe. I was always a friend to truth and ſincerity; and I believe I ſhould not, in my vaineſt moments, have thought ſuch a behaviour even tolerable. They who have a high reliſh for the pure delights of friendſhip, cannot bear to have the ſacred name of Friend uſurped by thoſe who have neither ſenſe nor delicacy enough to know what it means. The very pretence made by ſuch a perſon is like uſing the name on purpoſe to betray: beſides, this polite kind of complaiſance, as it does not ſpring from the heart, loſes all it's winning graces; for nothing can touch the heart that does not originally ſpring from it. But I muſt proceed.

The next day about noon, Valville, my two uncles, Mr. De Roſand, and I, ſet out for Verſailles; after taking leave of Mrs. Dorſin, who embraced me, and gave us the uſual compliments of wiſhing us a good journey. Our converſation upon the road was gay and ſprightly, and made the time paſs away very agreeably. In the evening we arrived at the count's houſe, a magnificent edifice near the city. When we ſtepped out of the coach, he gave me his hand, led me in, and preſented me to the counteſs his lady; who, I could eaſily perceive, regarded me with a cold and reſtrained countenance, which ſhe diſcovered in ſpite of herſelf; and which, perhaps, was more viſible by her endeavouring to conceal it, for her very ſmiles were clouded with an air of diſcontent. She was pretty fat; and, though above forty, had beauty enough to render her perſon agreeable; though ſhe had ſomething in her look which did not pleaſe me; ſomething that, methought, ſhewed a diſpoſition ſelfiſh, and a little mercenary.

While this lady was bidding us welcome, my grandmother entered the room; and no ſooner ſaw me, than ſhe caſt her arms about my neck—'My 'dear child,' cried ſhe, 'I rejoice that 'I have lived to ſee thee again before 'I die;

'I die: thy looks are enough to convince me that thou art, indeed, my 'grand-daughter. What a reſemblance there is between you and my 'ſon's wife! Methinks I ſee again 'that dear lady before me! They are 'both revived in thee.' Here I threw my arms about her neck; the tears guſhed from my eyes; while I felt ſome new, ſome unknown affections, riſing in my breaſt; ſenſations which I had not hitherto either experienced or formed an idea of; a tenderneſs very different from that of love or friendſhip. 'Now,' cried I with a ſigh, 'I am 'happy indeed! Oh, my mother! my 'dear grandmother!' She wept too; whilſt joy ſhone through her tears, and all the emotions of her heart were viſible in her countenance. After our firſt tranſports were over, we ſat down; when the old lady aſked Mr. De Roſand a thouſand queſtions concerning me, with an eagerneſs which expreſſed all the affection of a parent; then called him her beſt friend, the patron of her family, and the father of her dear child. At laſt, ſhe deſired to know if Mr. De Valville was not the gentleman that was ſhortly to be her grandſon? the count told her he was; and that we were to be married in a few days. 'Well,' cried ſhe, 'may Heaven pour 'down upon you both it's choiceſt 'bleſſings! May your happineſs ex'ceed even your wiſhes.' We thanked the old lady for her bleſſing, and then inſenſibly entered into a general converſation.

The next morning the count took Valville and me aſide; and, telling us he wanted to have ſome private converſation with us, conducted us into his cloſet; where, being ſeated, he ſhewed us the writings belonging to my father's eſtate: in which I found, that though a conſiderable part of it went with the title, yet I ſhould receive a fortune, in money and lands, greatly ſuperior to Valville's. 'Here, niece,' ſaid the count to me, 'you ſee the 'eſtate you were born to enjoy, and 'which you have hitherto been deprived of: I have poſſeſſed it for many 'years; and therefore you may make 'a demand upon me for the produce of 'your rents ever ſince my brother's 'deceaſe; but I am perſuaded, from 'the amiable character I have heard of 'your humanity, and greatneſs of ſoul, 'that you will not inſiſt upon all the 'arrears which you may claim as your 'due. I have lived in a manner ſuitable to the eſtate which I thought had 'been my own; and therefore am unable to anſwer ſuch large demands, 'without bringing inevitable ruin upon 'myſelf and family.' Here he pauſed, and I turned my eyes towards Valville, who, in the ſame inſtant, met them with a glance, which ſeemed to deſire me to follow the generous ſentiments he obſerved in my looks. 'Sir,' returned I immediately, (for theſe glances which conveyed our thoughts to each other were over in a moment) 'my uncle has before mentioned this 'to me; and I thought he would have 'told you my reſolution: which is, 'that I will never, if I can help it, give 'you any reaſon to repent your knowing me. I would not for the world 'occaſion you or your family the leaſt 'uneaſineſs: I readily throw up all 'ſuch claims as you mention; and am 'ſincerely ſorry that you cannot know 'me without loſing part of your eſtate; 'and will therefore give you an acquittance for all the ſums you have 'received upon it, as ſoon as you are 'pleaſed to deliver it to me.'—'What! 'my dear!' cried he with amazement, 'ſure I do not underſtand you! you 'cannot mean it! Have you conſidered 'what you ſay?'—'Yes, Sir,' returned I, ſmiling; 'I do not deſire any of 'the arrears which are due to me: I 'ſhall have enough without them; and 'therefore am reſolved not to accept of 'any thing from you which would be 'a prejudice to your family. You 'have hitherto laid out the profits of 'my eſtate in a manner that reflects a 'glory upon yourſelf and name; and it 'would be barbarous in me to accept 'of what would give you reaſon to regret the tenderneſs you have ſhewn 'for the unhappy and the miſerable.' —'My dear,' returned he, 'it is impoſſible for me to expreſs my ſurprize 'at your generoſity: I neither expected, nor deſired, you to carry it ſo far. 'I can ſpare you fifty thouſand crowns 'without any inconvenience; and this 'I muſt deſire you to accept of, ſince 'it falls very ſhort of the ſum which I 'am indebted to you.'—'No, Sir,' returned Valville, 'you muſt not expect 'that Marianne will recede from her 'reſolution, ſince it is to oblige a per-

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'ſon for whom ſhe has ſuch a great 'eſteem: I approve of her ſentiments; 'and muſt join with her in deſiring 'you to lay aſide theſe thoughts.' But all our arguments could not prevail upon him, they rather ſtrengthened his reſolution; ſo that I was at laſt obliged to accept of notes for the money. This done, he went to fetch me a box of jewels which belonged to my mother.

As ſoon as he was gone, I took the pen and a ſheet of paper, and wrote as follows.

'THESE notes I preſent to my dear 'couſins, daughters of my ho-'noured uncle the Count De V———, 'as a teſtimony of my early affection 'to them; which I deſire may be equal-'ly divided amongſt them, as they 'come to age, or upon the day of their 'marriage.

'MARIANNE.'

Valville ſeemed much pleaſed at this thought; but as I was ſealing up the notes in this paper, we heard the counteſs's voice; when, liſtening, I heard her go with the count into the next room, which was only divided from that we were in by a ſlight partition; ſo that, as they talked pretty loud, we could underſtand almoſt every word they ſaid. 'What, Sir!' cried ſhe, 'refuſe to accept of fifty thouſand 'crowns! It is hardly to be believed! 'I was afraid your niece would have 'inſiſted upon having all that the law 'would allow her. But how did her 'lover look? Did not his countenance 'ſhew his diſcontent?'—'No, not at 'all,' returned he: 'there was nothing 'but joy and ſatisfaction ſpread over 'his face; and his eyes told me that 'my niece's behaviour gave him an in-'finite ſatisfaction.'—'Well,' ſaid ſhe, 'they will force me, I find, to love 'them in ſpite of myſelf; though I 'have not been able hitherto to look 'upon them without uneaſineſs, as 'imagining that this diſcovery would 'entirely ruin the fortunes of my chil-'dren. I am glad, for the poor dears 'ſakes, they would not accept of the 'money.'—'What do you mean?' replied he: 'as I can very well ſpare 'that ſum, I could not help preſſing my 'niece to accept of it; gratitude, ho-'nour, and every conſideration, made 'me reſolve to take no denial: at laſt 'I was ſo happy as to prevail; and 'have therefore given her notes for it.' —'How! ſure you have not been ſo 'weak!' cried ſhe. 'I am amazed at 'your folly! How many of our nobi-'lity would have ſold their country for 'ſuch a ſum! But you have a greater 'regard for your niece than for me 'and my family. They knew, I ſup-'poſe, who they had to deal with, and 'behaved accordingly. Their genero-'ſity was only a pretence to ingratiate 'themſelves into your favour, that they 'might accept of it with a better grace.' —'Madam,' returned he, 'you uſe 'me very ill: but I cannot wonder at 'it, ſince you can injure, by your un-'juſt ſuſpicions, perſons to whom you 'are under ſuch ſurprizing obliga-'tions. I love you; you know I do: 'and I have the greateſt tenderneſs for 'my children: but theſe affections ſhall 'never corrupt my integrity, or make 'me guilty of an action unworthy a 'man of my quality!' Theſe laſt words, methought, were delivered in a tone that expreſſed a noble kind of pride, and a dignity of ſoul truly great; but he had no ſooner ſaid this, than he entered the room to us with ſome diſorder in his looks; when, after paying me ſome compliments, he preſented to me a caſket of jewels, which he told me had been my mother's: I received them without heſitation, and returned him a great many thanks. He then took a chair, and ſat down by me; when, obſerving the ſmall packet I had juſt been making up, which I held in my hand, he aſked me what it was. 'It is, Sir,' ſaid I, 'a preſent I would make to my 'couſins, your daughters, to buy them 'ſome baubles when they come of age, 'or againſt their marriage: you will be 'ſo good as keep it for them. But you 'muſt not take it ill, that I have reſerv-'ed nothing for your ſon; ſince I have 'not omitted the young gentleman out 'of diſreſpect; but only from a conſi-'deration that, as his fortune will be 'much ſuperiors to theirs, he might, 'perhaps, be above accepting of pre-'ſents from me.'—'Well, Miſs,' re-turned he, 'I ſee you are reſolved to 'lay us all under obligations, and to do 'it, too, in a manner peculiar to your-'ſelf; for you have already much oblig-'ed my children, by your generous be-'haviour to me: but may not I know 'what it is that you have here incloſed

'for

'for them? Let it be what it will, it 'muſt be a very acceptable preſent, as 'it comes from you; and I will have 'them called in, to return you their 'thanks.'—'You are at liberty, Sir,' returned I, 'to ſatisfy your curioſity, 'ſince I find it would be painful to 'you to forbear.' Here he broke open the packet, and immediately caſt his eyes upon his notes; when, turning to me with an air of ſurprize and pleaſure —'My dear niece,' ſaid he, 'I ſhould 'be much more aſtoniſhed at your be-'haviour did I not know you to be my 'brother's daughter; for, notwith-'ſtanding the great reſemblance be-'tween you and my amiable ſiſter, you 'are more like him than her, ſince you 'have his ſoul, as well as her lovely 'form; his ſolidity, as well as her de-'licacy of ſentiment. But as it muſt 'be agreeable to you to hear the cha-'racter of this great, this generous 'man, I will, in a few words, give you 'ſuch inſtances of it as muſt fill you 'with admiration, and render his me-'mory ſtill more dear to you.

'My father, who ſincerely loved his 'children, took care to give us all a 'very liberal education, every way ſuit-'ed to the greatneſs of our family: my 'two brothers and I began early to be 'united by the moſt generous friend-'ſhip; a friendſhip of greater force than 'all the ties of blood. As our inclina-'tions were the ſame, all our diver-'ſions and amuſements were ſo too; 'ſo that we became inſeparable; and 'might have continued ſo, had not I, 'by the heat and extravagant madneſs 'of youth, been drawn to commit ſuch 'follies, as not only inſenſibly weaned 'from me the affections of my brothers, 'but at laſt exaſperated my father to 'ſuch a degree, that he reſolved to diſ-'inherit me. Your father uſed all his 'endeavours to reclaim me; and, with 'the tears in his eyes, frequently laid 'before me the ſtupidity of my con-'duct: but I was too far gone to hear 'reaſon. One day my brother was ſent 'for into my father's cloſet, when the 'good old man deſired him to ſit down, 'took hold of his hand, and gave him 'a look, which, he afterwards told me, 'pierced his very ſoul—"My dear "boy," ſaid he, "I am very ſure thou "art ſenſible of my affection to thee "and thy brothers, which has been ſo "equally divided, that I have not "known who has had the greateſt ſhare "in my heart. I have flattered myſelf "that you would all have been the de-"light and ſupport of my age: the per-"fect unanimity and concord which "have been preſerved amongſt you have "given me a ſatisfaction which you "can form no idea of till you yourſelf "are a father. But, alas! how are all "my hopes vaniſhed! Your brother, "child! your brother will bring down "my grey hairs with ſorrow to the "grave. I have done my endeavours "to reclaim him; but in vain: his "conſcience makes him fly from me, "his father, as if he thought me his "enemy; he fears my reproaches, but "does not fear to deſerve them. Oh! "how little does he know the yearnings "of heart that I feel for him! When "I conſider what he was, and what "he is now, all the father riſes in my "ſoul, and I feel my reſentment mix-"ed with tenderneſs and pity. What "a degenerate age is this, in which "rapes and adultery are called by the "ſpecious name of gallantry; in which "every debauch is faſhionable, and "virtue repreſented as only fit for thoſe "queer fellows who are unqualified "for ſociety! I have now no hopes left "of reclaiming this undutiful ſon; and "have therefore reſolved to puniſh him, "by caſting him off. I will make a "new will, and give that part of my "eſtate which I intended for him, to "thee; but I beg, when he is in want, "thou wouldſt remember he is thy "brother."

'Here your father caſt himſelf at 'the old gentleman's feet; and, lifting 'up his head, with the tears ſtreaming 'from his eyes—"Dear Sir," cried 'he, "let me on my knees beg you "would remember that he is ſtill your "ſon, your once dear ſon: what can "you hope for by driving him to extre-"mities?"—"Ariſe, ariſe!" cried he, 'interrupting him, and giving him his 'hand, "I have conſidered him in that "light till he has almoſt broke my "heart. Had he my whole eſtate, he "would ſquander it away; and there-"fore what I now do will only make "him unhappy a few months ſooner "than he would have rendered himſelf "ſo. I have now ſent for an attorney, "and will this day reward your affec-"tion to me, as well as let him know "what it is to injure the tenderneſs of "a father.

" a father. Perhaps this ſtep may re-
" claim him; and then I ſhall gladly
" receive him again to my favour."
' My brother again interpoſed; but to
' no purpoſe: my father was inflexible;
' and my brother went away full of
' grief at the misfortune that was fall-
' en upon me. Impatient to find me,
' that he might impart to me the trou-
' bles of his heart, he ſent his ſervants
' to ſeek me; and went himſelf to take
' a walk under thoſe tall elms you ſee
' there behind the garden, whoſe me-
' lancholy ſhades were proper to ſoothe
' his affliction. Meanwhile I, return-
' ing home from a debauch which had
' detained me all night, was told my
' brother had enquired for me; and,
' after ſearching for him ſome time,
' found him walking there in a pen-
' ſive manner, with his arms acroſs,
' and his eyes fixed on the ground. I
' flew to him, impatient to learn the
' cauſe of his uneaſineſs. The noiſe I
' made awaked him from his reverie;
' he turned, came back to meet me, re-
' lated all that had paſſed, and repre-
' ſented his grief in ſuch lively colours,
' that I began to pity him, and abhor
' myſelf; but could not be prevailed
' upon to forſake a beautiful creature
' whom I had provided for. The will
' was made that day, which excluded
' me from poſſeſſing any part of my
' father's eſtate: and a few weeks af-
' ter the good old man ſunk under the
' weight of his uneaſineſs, which was
' too great for his age to ſupport.

' I now began to ſink into deſpair:
' my miſtreſs was denied to me, and
' would not give me an opportunity to
' ſee her; when, ſtung with ſhame and
' grief at the reflection of my paſt con-
' duct, I privately retired to a ſmall
' town where I was unknown, and en-
' deavoured to get a commiſſion in the
' army: but, as I wanted money, all
' my endeavours were ineffectual; ſo
' that I was ſoon reduced to want and
' miſery. I now looked upon myſelf
' with horror; reflected on my father's
' tenderneſs, and the pains he had
' taken to reclaim me, with confuſion;
' and continually reproached myſelf
' with being the cauſe of his death.
' The friendſhip that had ſubſiſted be-
' tween me and my brothers, and all
' their tender admonitions, had now ſuch
' an effect upon me, that I looked back
' upon that virtuous union with re-
' gret; wondered how I could forſake
' that happineſs for the mad tumultu-
' ous joys of vice and folly; and was
' almoſt ready, in this laſt extremity,
' to fly to them for ſuccour; but was
' reſtrained by conſcious guilt and
' ſhame.

' The young count (my elder bro-
' ther, and your father) had no ſooner
' taken poſſeſſion of his eſtate, than he
' made it his buſineſs to ſearch for me;
' and at laſt got information not only
' of the place of my retreat, but of al-
' moſt every circumſtance of my re-
' pentance; and immediately ſent his
' ſervant with orders to ride poſt to me
' with the following letter.

" DEAR BROTHER,

" AS you had reaſon to believe me
" ſincerely ſorry for my dear
" father's ſeverity, you ought not to
" have given me the pain of hiding
" yourſelf from me at a time when it
" was in my power to ſoften the rigour
" of his reſentment. I have this mo-
" ment been informed of your ſitua-
" tion; and cannot help letting you
" immediately know the joy I feel at
" the delightful news of your reforma-
" tion. Oh, that my father had but
" lived to ſee this change! he would
" then have died with comfort. I have
" found amongſt his papers a will that
" was made when our friendſhip, and
" his affection for you, was at the
" height. Had he lived to ſee this
" happy day, he doubtleſs would have
" gladly reſtored you to his favour,
" and have given you the ſame part of
" his fortune as he deſigned to do
" when you had never offended him:
" I therefore think myſelf bound to
" do it for him; and have accordingly
" ſent you the writings, which your
" return to wiſdom and virtue give
" you a juſt claim to. Let me ſee you
" as ſoon as poſſible; which will be the
" greateſt ſatisfaction to your affec-
" tionate brother,

" De V——.

" P. S. I have incloſed a note for a
" ſum which, I hope, will be ſuf-
" ficient to pay what debts you
" may have contracted, and de-
" fray the expence of your jour-
" ney; which you need not re-
" turn me till it ſuits with your
" convenience."

'It is impoſſible, my dear niece, to give you an idea of the greatneſs of my ſurprize and admiration at reading this letter; I could hardly perſuade myſelf but it was all a dream: I read it over and over, while my heart ſwelled with the moſt warm and grateful affections. How lovely did this noble act make him appear! What a ſuperiority did it give him not only over me, but the reſt of mankind! I could hardly help perſuading myſelf that he was ſome ſuperior being, ſome guardian deity. Virtue now had a thouſand graces hitherto unobſerved; ſhe appeared all lovely, all divine! I haſtened to Verſailles, and was received with open arms by my brothers: but when I would have thanked your father, my gratitude aroſe too big to find utterance in words; I could only preſs his hand, and tell him that my full heart thanked him, though my lips refuſed to do it. "Come, come, man," replied he, laughing, and giving me a tap on the ſhoulder, "do not talk of thanks with ſuch a ſolemn face; let us have no more on this ſubject: my brother and I rejoice equally to ſee you thus; and are reſolved to ſhew the world that, for once, brothers can be friends, and ſincere ones too. You muſt now ſee that I have done you juſtice: here are the two wills; this gives you an eſtate; and that takes it from you."—"Well, then," cried your uncle, "ſuppoſe we ſhould ſhew our reſentment againſt this laſt teſtament, which has been ſo prejudicial to our friendſhip as to make you fly from us, by committing it to the flames?"—"It is generouſly ſpoken!" returned the count; "you are willing, then, to give up the right you now enjoy of poſſeſſing my eſtate, if I ſhould happen to die without an heir?"—"Yes," cried he, "that I will moſt heartily; and would do much more for ſuch a brother." Here I embraced them both; and the laſt will was accordingly, after I had read it, thrown into the fire.'

'We now became better friends than ever: my brothers virtues were ever before my eyes; I aſpired to be like them, and cheriſhed the noble ſeeds they had ſown in my breaſt.' Your father, ſoon after this happy meeting, married a moſt accompliſhed lady; and, in leſs than a twelvemonth, you were born as a pledge of their mutual tenderneſs. About the ſame time, my younger brother, thirſting after glory, bought a commiſſion; and has ſerved almoſt ever ſince with great reputation in the army. But, alas! the count's joys were of ſhort duration; ſince, in leſs than three years after your birth, a period was put to his felicity in this life, and that of his lady.

'I have now given you, my dear niece,' continued he, 'a ſhort ſketch of your father's virtues, and the obligations he has laid upon me to revere his memory. From this you may form an idea of the greatneſs of his ſoul, and the reſemblance you bear to him in the divine part of his noble character, I am under the greateſt obligations to you both; nor can I help being ſurprized to find in you, who have never been ſo happy as to copy any part of your conduct from him, the ſame diſpoſitions which diſtinguiſhed him from the reſt of mankind. Happy is the father who has ſuch a child! But there is one thing that I ought to add, to compleat the character I have attempted to give you of this great, good man; and that is, that his benevolence was unconfined and diffuſive: and he was looked upon as the father of all the miſerable and diſtreſſed.'

I liſtened, Madam, to this ſhort hiſtory of my father's life with a great degree of pleaſure: the repetition of theſe heroick virtues in a perſon whom nature had rendered ſo near to me, fired my heart, and filled me with a laudable kind of vanity; and yet, at the ſame time, I could not help lamenting his loſs, and ſhedding ſome tears at the reflection that this dear and valuable man was deprived of life before I had the happineſs to know him. Methought I ſhould have embraced him with a tranſport of joy, as ſoon as I had been able to thank him for this generous behaviour to my uncle, and was ſorry that I had never had an opportunity of doing this.

As ſoon as the count had done, and I had thanked him for this pleaſing ſtory, Valville made ſome very juſt reflections on the nature of true greatneſs; and proved that ſuch god-like diſpoſi-

tions

tions render a character more ſhining than that of the greateſt heroes who have only ſought for glory, however great may have been their ſucceſs. 'It 'is the rectitude of the heart, and the 'truly benevolent diſpoſition of the 'mind,' ſaid he, 'that conſtitutes a 'great character; for the man who is ſo 'diſintereſted as thus to ſacrifice private 'advantages to the good of others, 'would doubtleſs, from the ſame mo-'tives, give up his life, and all that is 'dear to him, to ſave his country.'

The count now propoſed our joining the reſt of our friends, imagining that Mr. De Roſand and his brother would not be pleaſed at being ſo long deprived of our company; on which we aroſe, and went to look for them; but were told that thoſe gentlemen were gone to take a walk in the garden. Valville and I reſolved to follow them; while the count went to have ſome diſcourſe with his lady. We rambled about till we got out of ſight of the houſe; when my dear Valville looking round, and ſeeing nobody near enough to obſerve our actions, took hold of my hand, kiſſed it, and with a tender air preſſed it to his boſom; then fixing his eyes upon mine, cried, in a moving tone—'May I not prevail upon you, 'my dear, to haſten my happineſs? 'Since it is in your power to render me 'compleatly bleſſed, why do you delay 'it any longer? I long to call thee 'mine; and hardly know how to wait 'till the ſix weeks are expired.' Here I happening to look up, obſerved the gentlemen we came out in ſearch of: but, as I was not now ſo impatient to ſpeak with them as I was a minute before, I whiſpered Valville to be ſilent; and we both haſtily turned down another walk, and ran ſo faſt that we ſoon got out of ſight again, without their obſerving us. When I had recovered my breath a little—'I do not queſtion, 'Sir,' returned I, 'but you have 'gueſſed at my reaſon for deferring 'our marriage: you now know who 'I am, and are ſatisfied as to my birth 'and family, which makes any far-'ther delay needleſs; but yet I cannot 'think of it's being near without feel-'ing ſome kind of uneaſineſs; my heart 'flutters with ſome little painful appre-'henſions: but, however, I will not let 'theſe groundleſs ſcruples have any 'greateffect upon me; and will therefore 'refer it to you to fix on the day of our 'nuptials.'—'O my dear!' then cried he, claſping me in his arms, 'let it be 'to-morrow!'—'No, Sir!' returned I, diſengaging myſelf; 'that will be too 'ſoon; I cannot reſolve upon being ſo 'very haſty: beſides, we muſt make 'ſome preparations; nor am I yet fixed 'whether it ought to be celebrated here 'or at Mrs. Dorſin's.'—'It ſhall be 'where you pleaſe, my dear,' returned he; 'though, I fancy, the count will 'not part with us till we are married; 'we will ſend for Mrs. Dorſin, and 'whatever friends you pleaſe to invite: 'and as for our cloaths, I will give 'orders for them to be made with all 'poſſible expedition. You agree to 'this, my dear, do not you?'—'Yes, 'Sir,' returned I; 'but, I think, I 'ſhould rather chuſe that our nuptials 'ſhould be celebrated at Mrs. Dor-'ſin's; I ſhall be more at my eaſe there 'than with the counteſs: however, I 'muſt be ruled by my uncles.'

After ſome farther converſation on this ſubject, we agreed to look for our friends, whom we had purpoſely avoided a little before; and therefore turned back to the walk where we had diſcovered them: but not ſeeing them there, we went in, and found them waiting for us in a parlour facing the garden, with the counteſs-dowager, the count, and ſeveral perſons of quality, ſome of my father's and mother's friends, who were now come to pay their compliments to me. Amongſt theſe was a lady who, at firſt ſight, careſſed me with an air of much friendſhip; and whoſe behaviour was too engaging not to prejudice me immediately in her favour. This was a perſon who had been my mother's boſom friend, and the ſame lady who had made me a preſent of the head-dreſs which had been the means of the diſcovery of my family. But I ſhall forbear giving you a portrait of her perſon, or the qualifications of her mind, ſince that would be needleſs, after I have told you it was the Marchioneſs De R———, with whom you are perfectly acquainted.

Dinner was hardly over, when I was agreeably ſurprized with the arrival of Mrs. Dorſin and Miſs De Fare; who were too eager to ſhare in my happineſs to ſtay till they were ſent for. Their company, you may imagine, Madam, was a very high ſatisfaction to me, as

I wanted ſuch friends of my own ſex as I could be perfectly free with, whoſe advice I might aſk on a hundred occaſions; for I could not help feeling a little reſerve, and being under a kind of reſtraint, with people whom I had but juſt come to the knowledge of: but methought I now began to breathe a little more freely; and, really, the ſight of them gave a ſurprizing addition to my happineſs. Valville put me in mind to conſult with them about my cloaths; I did ſo: ſeveral tradeſmen were ſent for; and, after a long diſſertation upon dreſs, in which all the ladies bore a part, we at laſt fixed upon ſome very fine ſilks, laces, and cambricks; which were ordered to be made up with all expedition.

The next morning Valville and I went out of mourning for my dear mother; when the count propoſed our going to court, which was immediately agreed upon; and, as ſoon as dinner was over, we dreſſed as gay as poſſible to make our appearance there. The counteſs, who now began to look upon me with a favourable eye, reſolved to accompany us; but it was with much difficulty that we prevailed upon Mr. De Roſand to do ſo. As I entered the palace-gate, I felt an unuſual tremor upon my ſpirits, which I found increaſe upon me every moment: however, we went on; and the chearfulneſs I obſerved in the countenances of thoſe about me, alleviated a little this diſorder. I found the eyes of every one fixed upon Miſs De Fare and me as we paſſed along, in a manner that diſcovered their admiration; and even heard ſeveral whiſpers from gentlemen who paſſed by us, which were too agreeable to eſcape unobſerved. But we had no ſooner entered the anti-chamber, than I obſerved a plain elderly gentleman ſtop the count, and ſhake him by the hand with a very friendly air: they whiſpered ſomething together, and then came up to me; when I was ſurprized to find that this perſon was the prime-miniſter, who would have forced me to marry Villot; and who, at laſt, was ſo affected with my behaviour, as to declare that he could not help approving of my mother's affection, and my lover's paſſion. He ſaluted Valville and me in a frank and obliging manner, congratulated us upon our happineſs, and the diſcovery we had made; and even offered to introduce us to the royal preſence. We thanked him, returned his compliment, and accepted of his obliging propoſal; on which we immediately followed him; though I trembled ſo that I was hardly able to walk. We found his majeſty talking to ſome perſons of quality, and ſo engaged that he did not ſee us; when the miniſter and the count went up to him: but they had not left us many minutes, before we obſerved that, on a ſudden, all eyes were fixed upon us; and, methought, their looks ſeemed to ſingle out me; on which the count came to us, and let us know his majeſty deſired to ſpeak with us. At this we all moved forward; and Miſs De Fare and I threw ourſelves at his feet; when, with a gallant air, he offered us his hand to help us up; gave us a ſalute; and, after ſome compliments upon our beauty, welcomed us to court; and gave Valville and Mr. De Roſand the honour to kiſs his hand.

I had now recovered myſelf ſo far as to be able to take notice of the magnificence that every where ſurrounded us in this palace. Several of the nobility, who ſeemed to take a pleaſure in hearing themſelves ſay what they thought fine things, were continually buzzing in our ears diſcourſes upon the pretended conqueſt we had made of their hearts; and a thouſand little ſoft, tender, ſilly things, which were uttered in a manner as gallant and fluent as if they had inceſſantly repeated the ſame ſmart things; as, indeed, it was their cuſtom to do ſo to every lady of tolerable beauty. We ſhould have been very glad to have dropped this troubleſome company; but we found it impoſſible: for they were reſolved, as Miſs De Fare and I had never been at court before, to ſhew us every thing worthy of admiration; though we had no need of their aſſiſtance, ſince my two uncles were as well acquainted with every thing of that nature as they could be.

After we had viewed the curious paintings in the gallery, as well as the moſt magnificent of the apartments, we agreed, by common conſent, to take a turn in the garden; where every thing appeared new to Miſs De Fare and me; and I could not, indeed, reſtrain the admiration that ſeized me, where every thing

thing I ſaw was a new ſubject of wonder and ſurprize. The grotto; the triumphal arch, ſo richly adorned with marble ſtatues, that it ſeemed endued with all the powers of intellect and paſſion; the caſcades, ſupported by ſatyrs and cupids; the ſhips, barges, and yatchts, in the canal, and, among the reſt, the man of war which, I think they told me, carried fifty guns; were a very agreeable ſight to me, who had never ſeen any thing of this nature before: nor, indeed, was I leſs delighted with the fountains; particularly that of Neptune and the Sea-nymphs, and thoſe of the Fables of Æſop. Struck with a profuſion of delight at the ſight of ſuch triumphs of art, I was at a loſs at firſt how to make known my aſtoniſhment, and could only expreſs my wonder by my ſilence: but Valville told me, that even that had a voice which plainly diſcovered all my ſentiments. He had his eyes continually fixed upon me; and ſeemed more delighted at the dumb ſatisfaction I diſcovered than if I had given it words. But, at laſt, my ideas of all theſe harmonious diſpoſitions, this ſcene of wonders, were diſconcerted by a ſudden guſt of wind, which brought ſuch a whirl of duſt in our faces as was very troubleſome to us. This gave me a diſguſt againſt the walks; which were ſo far from being ornamental, that a little wind rendered them quite incommodious.

But admiration, Madam, is, perhaps, one of thoſe ſenſations that is of the ſhorteſt duration; the moſt wonderful and aſtoniſhing pieces of human art ſoon grow familiar to us, and even, upon a ſecond view, loſe a great part of their ſtriking beauties: thus I have ſince enjoyed the ſame objects a hundred times, without the leaſt part of that agreeable aſtoniſhment which they at firſt occaſioned.

As we now thought it time to return home to the count's, we took coach; and the gentlemen who had hitherto attended us, left us at liberty more freely to enjoy our own reflections. As ſoon as we were ſeated, Mr. De Roſand, Valville, Mrs. Dorſin, and I, who filled that lady's coach, entered into a general converſation on the beauties of the place we had left; when, after we had freely given our opinions of all we had ſeen, Mr. De Roſand made ſome excellent reflections on the infinite diſproportion there is between the fineſt and moſt curious pieces of human art, and the common, unregarded mechaniſm of nature. This introduced ſome pleaſing obſervations upon natural philoſophy, which the old gentleman managed in ſuch an agreeable manner as to render his diſcourſe equally entertaining and inſtructive to us all. But I muſt proceed.

The next morning, ſoon after I was dreſſed, I heard ſomebody rap ſoftly at my chamber-door; and, upon opening it, was ſurprized to ſee my dear Valville richly dreſſed in the cloaths that he had ordered to be made for our wedding. 'I am come, my dear,' ſaid he, as ſoon as he ſaw me, 'impatient to let 'you ſee that my taylor has been as 'expeditious as if he too had been 'ſpurred on by love; and to let you 'know that there are ſeveral perſons 'below who wait to try on your cloaths.' —'How!' returned I, ſecretly pleaſed; 'have you been able to prevail upon 'them to do impoſſibilities? I did not 'expect that my cloaths would be 'tried on theſe two or three days at 'ſooneſt; it was but the day before 'yeſterday that we employed them.'— 'O my dear,' returned he, 'love and 'gold can do wonders!' I then went down; and was ſoon dreſſed in a manner more gay than I had ever yet been: and, to deal ingenuouſly, I never in my life appeared more agreeable in my own opinion than I did now. I had often thought that I had conquered every degree of my natural vanity; but I ſoon found myſelf entirely miſtaken: my heart beat with a quicker motion under theſe rich brocades than under a plain ſilk or a ſable mourning; and this, I dare ſay, at once made my eyes ſparkle with an additional luſtre. But who is ſhe that can pretend perfectly to know herſelf? We judge of our hearts by our preſent diſpoſitions; and ſince theſe diſpoſitions are almoſt infinitely various, no wonder that we have not always a command over ourſelves. My afflictions, and the many mortifying circumſtances I had gone through, joined to the examples of my excellent and dear mother and Mrs. Dorſin, you have, perhaps, imagined, had perfectly killed this folly; and I ſhould have thought ſo too: but, alas! I found I was a mere woman ſtill, and far from being above the little foibles of

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my ſex. A large glaſs, in which I viewed myſelf at leiſure, from head to foot, conſpired againſt me, and even ſaid as many flattering things as the perſons about me; or at leaſt perſuaded me that all they uttered was ſtrictly true. The counteſs now ſaid many obliging things to me; and I was ſo pleaſed with the juſtice that I thought ſhe did my charms, that I began to feel a real friendſhip for her: for the pleaſure, Madam, that attends ſelf-applauſe, is ſo very ſweet, that, whoever inſpires it by teaching us to be pleaſed with ourſelves, gains the readieſt acceſs to our hearts, the ſureſt way to our affections. This we find, from daily experience, to be ſtrictly true; for, whether this ſelf-complacency be laudable or not, whatever contributes to it inſpires the moſt flattering and inſinuating, though not always the moſt reaſonable, pleaſures.

But a mere accident ſoon checked my folly, and brought me to myſelf; for, going afterwards into my apartment, in order to look into a portmanteau, which I brought from Paris, for ſomething I wanted, I happened to caſt my eyes upon a paper which I had by miſtake put into it, which, as ſoon as I opened, I found to be one of the letters my dear mother had ſent to me while I was in the convent. This ſight in a moment gave a turn to my paſſions, and at once melted me into a moſt tender ſoftneſs; and, indeed, I now felt a more ſolid delight in indulging my tears than I had before done in all that folly which had juſt ſwelled my little proud heart. The reflection of her humility and condeſcenſion made me now bluſh with ſhame. 'How ill,' cried I, 'do I imitate her lovely ex-'ample! and how far fall ſhort of at-'taining to her virtues!' I amuſed myſelf for a long time with theſe thoughts; and had hardly recovered myſelf when a ſervant came to tell me that dinner was on the table: when I went down, and, by degrees, reſumed my uſual gaiety.

But now the time, from whence I am to date my happineſs compleat, approached; for not only Valville and Mrs. Dorſin, but my two uncles, Miſs De Fare, and the counteſs, joined, while we were at dinner, to perſuade me to give my hand to that dear man the next day: and, as I had no material objection, I could no longer refuſe it; though I felt, in granting this requeſt, a painful kind of timidity, which ſtruggled with my love, and made me, at the ſame time, wiſh and fear the ſame thing. I longed to call Valville mine, and to reward his tenderneſs with an unreſerved affection: I longed to let him ſee that my whole ſtudy was to render him happy; but yet the ſtep I was going to take never appeared of ſuch importance as it did now. The change in my life that I was ſuddenly to undergo, appeared the more ſurprizing the nearer it approached: however, I endeavoured to overcome this thoughtfulneſs, and to ſeem as chearful as ever all the reſt of the day; and, while we were at table, the glaſs went gaily round to our mutual felicity. But at night, I could not cloſe my eyes; I no ſooner laid my head on my pillow, than I began to revolve in my mind the various incidents of my life, from the firſt moment in which reflection began to dawn, and of which memory had retained but faint and obſcure traces: at firſt I conſidered myſelf as ſporting amidſt ſylvan ſcenes, endued with native innocence, and happy amidſt my childiſh amuſements and rural pleaſures; then, as growing up to riper underſtanding, and equally improving in wiſdom and folly; liſtening to the inſtructions of my kind benefactor, and attending to thoſe who flattered my growing vanity. Then again, in that humble ſtate, receiving the careſſes of that dear lady Mrs. De Roſand, or walking with her and her brother in their garden, or through the adjacent fields, and hearing their tender admonitions and pious lectures; while my imagination painted the well-known landſcapes before my eyes, the happy ſcenes of innocence and peace: then I ſurveyed the many calamities, joys, and pains, the ſtrange viciſſitudes of miſery and felicity that had ſince been my portion. Here the moſt ſenſible grief; there ſmiling joy; here unutterable anguiſh and deſpair; there hope and comfort; here every mortifying circumſtance, and there exulting in tranſports of delight, or calmly bleſſed in a happy tranquillity. Theſe reflections took me up ſome hours; when at laſt, caſting a glance forward to the rapturous hopes that lay before me, I cried out, in a low voice—

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'O my God! from what miſeries, 'from what ſcenes of complicated 'diſtreſs, haſt thou relieved me! How 'often have I been ſinking into deſpair! 'Oh! what gratitude is due to thee! 'Now am I to ſpend my life with the 'dear object of my tendereſt affec-'tions! May no unforeſeen accident 'blaſt our felicity! O thou moſt bene-'volent Being! render this union pro-'pitious! Bleſs this dear man! And 'may we ever be the objects of thy 'care, thy eſteem, and approbation!'

Thus did I employ my thoughts till the morning began to dawn, when a ſoft ſlumber ſtole upon my ſenſes, and huſhed them into calm and peaceful dreams, from which I was at laſt awaked by Mrs. Dorſin; who, wondering that I did not come down to breakfaſt, came to tell me it was ready, and that they only waited for me. As ſoon as I heard her rap at my door, and call me by my name, I rubbed my eyes, ſtarted out of bed, and let her in; when, after merrily chiding me for my ſlothfulneſs, ſhe wiſhed me joy of the happy morning; congratulated me on my approaching felicity; and told me ſhe hoped that, to the laſt day of my life, I ſhould look back upon this with the moſt lively pleaſure and ſatisfaction. I thanked her for this compliment; and immediately began to dreſs me with all expedition, when ſhe told me that the counteſs's woman had been ſeveral times to liſten at my door, in order to dreſs me; but, hearing no noiſe, they all began to fear that I was indiſpoſed: and added, that ſhe would ring the bell for her to come now; but I entreated her to forbear, and deſired her to ſtay with me till I was ready to go down, which ſhe readily conſented to.

As ſoon as I was ready, I went down with Mrs. Dorſin into the parlour, when all the company ſaluted me, and gave me many obliging compliments; and in particular the counteſs-dowager, my grandmother, who claſped her feeble arms about my neck, called me her dear child, and ſaid ſuch tender things, that the tears ſtarted into her eyes: Valville's countenance at the ſame time ſparkled with joy; every feature in his face expreſſed his contentment; and when he told me that he thought himſelf the happieſt perſon upon earth, his full heart ſeemed to ſay ſo too. But nothing affected me more than Mr. De Roſand's behaviour; who, having ſaluted me, and taken hold of my hand, began a compliment too tender for him to utter; the ſoft ſwelling of his heart ſtopped his voice; ſome affectionate drops rolled down his cheeks; when he turned away his head, and ſat down, abaſhed and unable to proceed.

As I deſired that the marriage ſhould be performed as privately as poſſible, we invited nobody but thoſe friends of our family whom I was already acquainted with: the day, however, was ſpent with all imaginable mirth and gaiety; but it was a mirth untainted by that obſcenity which, upon ſuch occaſions, is too often looked upon as the very quinteſſence of wit; for nothing was ſaid in this polite company which the pureſt and moſt perfect modeſty might not bear without a bluſh. Our dinner was very grand, and, indeed, perfectly elegant; and, while we were at table, we were entertained with a fine concert of vocal and inſtrumental muſick, performed by the moſt ſkilful maſters that could be procured. When this was over, play and dancing were propoſed; and we fixed upon the latter: but my thoughts were ſo taken up with the importance of the engagement into which I was entering, that I hardly knew what I did; they ſaw my diſorder without ſeeming to do it, and endeavoured only to bring me to myſelf, by diverting me and fixing my attention upon other objects. Valville frequently took me aſide, and endeavoured to raiſe my ſpirits, by ſaying all the tender things that love could dictate. About ten at night, we all went into the count's chapel, which was finely illuminated with wax-candles: my heart here fluttered afreſh; I trembled; and my concern increaſed to ſuch a degree, that I hardly knew how to behave. The ceremony was at firſt propoſed to be performed by Mr. De Roſand; but, upon his declining it, we unanimouſly agreed, that, as he had hitherto diſcharged the duty of a parent, he ſhould ſtand in that character now, and the count's chaplain diſcharge the office of the church. The ſolemnity of this ſacrament filled me with a ſurprizing kind of awe, (for I was never in my life more pious) and increaſed my confuſion to that degree,

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that I hardly knew how to proceed; but it was no ſooner over than I began to recover myſelf; my heart, in a moment, became leſs heavy, and I received the careſſes of my friends with a pretty good grace: a ſudden kind of joy ſeemed at once to diffuſe itſelf through my ſoul. 'Valville,' ſaid I to myſelf, 'is now mine, for ever mine; and I 'can have no reaſon to fear being 'happy, ſince that depends entirely 'upon myſelf, entirely upon a heart 'ſo well diſpoſed to render him ſo. 'What felicity may I not expect from 'an unreſerved converſation, from 'the tender endearments, of this dear, 'amiable man!'

We now received abundance of congratulations and warm wiſhes for the long continuance of our mutual joys, which laſted till we ſat down to ſupper; where Valville and I were agreeably ſurprized to hear a very fine epithalamium ſung to ſoft muſick, which we afterwards found was wrote upon this occaſion by Mrs. Dorſin and Miſs De Fare.

After ſupper, the ball continued till about twelve, when the gentlemen and ladies accompanied us to our apartment; and, after the uſual ceremonies, retired.

The next morning we aroſe to breakfaſt, and again received the careſſes of our friends, who, by a charming vivacity and lively converſation, endeavoured to diſperſe the natural confuſion which I knew not how to diſguiſe; but I was not in a diſpoſition to enter much into the converſation, till Mrs. Dorſin mentioned Miſs De Terviere, and deſired me to favour the company with her agreeable ſtory, ſince none but Valville and ſhe were acquainted with it. This I looked upon as a very kind effort to bring me to myſelf, and therefore readily complied with her requeſt; but firſt propoſed, as it was a very fine day, that we ſhould remove to the ſummer-houſe in the midſt of the garden, which was ſurrounded on all ſides by a thick grove of trees. 'There,' ſaid I, 'we ſhall breathe all 'the fragrance of nature; and if I 'ſhould be a little flat in the repetition 'of the hiſtory of this charming wo-'man, the pleaſure we ſhall receive 'from the ſituation of the place will 'render my impertinence the more to-'lerable.'—'We ſhall all chuſe to be 'where it is the moſt agreeable to you, 'Madam,' returned the count; 'but 'the pleaſure we ſhall receive from 'hearing you will admit of no addi-'tion.' Here we all aroſe, went into the garden, and took our ſeats in that agreeable little building; when I began this affecting hiſtory, to which they all liſtened with the greateſt attention. When I had done, all the company expreſſed their concern for the poor unfortunate lady; and Mr. De Roſand made the moſt ſevere reflections on the conduct of the abbeſs, who, he ſaid, had behaved with greater inhumanity than any of her relations, ſince ſhe had rendered her miſerable without a poſſibility of redreſs. We now agreed to walk on the parterre till dinner; but we had no ſooner opened the door than we heard the bells from ſeveral neighbouring ſteeples, which made us all imagine that the marriage was made publick; and, indeed, this was not a groundleſs ſuppoſition, for dinner was no ſooner over than the porter's whiſtle informed us that company was at the gate, which proved to be ſeveral perſons of quality, who came to congratulate us on this happy occaſion: but their converſation was far from being agreeable to me in the preſent diſpoſition of my mind; however, I was obliged to bear with it.

About a week after this, we reſolved to return home to our country-houſe near Paris; but, as we were preparing for our ſhort journey, a meſſenger from court came for me, and told us that the queen deſired to ſee me. I was much alarmed at this order; but immediately prepared to wait on her majeſty, and went attended by my dear huſband and the counteſs. We were received with much affability and good humour; and, after a little diſcourſe on indifferent ſubjects, her majeſty deſired me to wait on her to her cloſet; where having made me take a ſeat—'I have heard, Ma-'dam,' ſaid ſhe, 'much diſcourſe con-'cerning ſome remarkable paſſages in 'your life, the whole of which, they 'ſay, has been very ſingular; and there-'fore have the curioſity to deſire to hear 'a particular account of it from your 'own mouth.'—'I am afraid,' returned I, 'your majeſty will find very

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'little entertainment from the low 'ſcenes in which I have been engaged; 'but I think myſelf greatly honoured 'by your condeſcending to hear me 'talk to you of myſelf; and will there- 'fore immediately obey you.' Here I related the moſt remarkable ſcenes of my life, only diſguiſing a little ſome part of Mr. De Climal's behaviour, and forbearing to mention Valville's infidelity. Her majeſty ſeemed extremely delighted with my narration; and, as ſoon as I had done, made ſome very warm encomiums on my virtue: told me that there were few like me at court, and that ſhe would find out ſome way to let me ſee that ſhe had a real eſteem for me; and then permitting me to kiſs her hand, gave me leave to retire. Valville and the counteſs I found waiting full of expectation for my return; and, after they had enquired what had paſſed, conducted me back to my uncles.

Were I writing a novel or romance, I ſhould, perhaps, Madam, according to cuſtom, have left off at our marriage, ſince all the pleaſing ſcenes which ariſe from tender diſtreſs are ſuppoſed there to have an end. The profeſſed enemies of that ſtate, indeed, will tell you, that however deſirable it may appear at a diſtance, a huſband and wife are the moſt flat and inſipid creatures, when together, of any in the univerſe; and, in ſhort, that they have nothing to expect but a dull round, a continual repetition, of all that is diſagreeable. But, believe me, Madam, this is mere commonplace declamation, and has not one word of truth in it: the happineſs of the marriage-ſtate is more uniform, but it is not, on that account, leſs exquiſite. It is not often ſo full of changes as the ſingle ſtate; but that may be becauſe our felicity riſes nearer to perfection: and this may be a good reaſon why I now paſs ſwiftly over the incidents that have happened between that time and this. But ſo much for digreſſion; now to return to the thread of my ſtory.

Our departure was now put off for a day or two longer; but as nothing material happened in this interval, I ſhall paſs it over till we came to our villa near Paris, whither we were attended by ſeveral of our friends: there we kept open houſe for ſeveral days. The morning after I arrived there, I made ſome excuſe, as ſoon as we had breakfaſted, to retire from the company, that I might be at leiſure to indulge a crowd of reflections which forced themſelves upon my mind. 'I am now,' ſaid I, (as ſoon as I was alone) 'happy in the 'poſſeſſion of my utmoſt wiſhes; but 'the continuance of theſe bleſſings in 'a great meaſure depends upon myſelf: 'for that ſweet harmony of ſentiment, 'that union of ſoul, and all thoſe dear 'tender ſenſations, which unite me to 'my huſband, muſt ever render us 'worthy of each other: but will no 'gloom ever overſpread our minds; no 'clouds obſcure our joys? Ah! what 'muſt I do to preſerve his affection, and 'keep alive that tender friendſhip which 'is the foundation of all my future 'hopes? Beauty is but a ſlender tie, and 'can charm only for a moment; what 'then muſt be done? He muſt ever think 'me his friend; and that I am moſt ſincerely. Friendſhip is the moſt laſting 'bond; and ſurely it is the only one 'that can render our union indiſſoluble.' While I was thus employed in endeavouring to fix upon ſome principles that might enable me to behave in ſuch a manner as to render myſelf ever agreeable, Mrs. Dorſin came to me, and deſired that I would freely tell her what employed my thoughts. I did ſo without ſcruple; when, taking a chair, and ſeating herſelf by me—'My dear,' cried ſhe, ſmiling, 'this concern is both the 'higheſt inſtance of your affection and 'prudence; for nothing can now be 'more worthy of your thoughts, or of 'greater conſequence to yourſelf and 'family. As all your happineſs de- 'pends on the tenderneſs of your huſ- 'band, to preſerve that is a care worthy 'of your higheſt ambition; for this you 'ſhould ſtill dreſs, and make yourſelf 'appear as lovely as poſſible, that he 'may ſtill admire you, and others ap- 'prove his choice. Some of our la- 'dies are no ſooner married, than they 'lay aſide all attempts to pleaſe at 'home: if they dreſs, it is not for their 'huſbands; as if they would appear to 'all beſides gay and lovely, to him 'alone diſagreeable. They behave as 'if they thought their point was gain- 'ed, and all attempts to appear in a 'graceful light to him were now unne- 'ceſſary. This ſhocks his natural de- 'licacy: and it is no wonder that ſhe, 'who once appeared almoſt divinely 'charming to the admiring lover, ſinks 'in his eſteem when ſhe thus degrades

'herſelf; for the tranſition is too great 'to fall at once from angel to a flat- 'tern. In the marriage-ſtate there are 'a thouſand nameleſs decencies to be 'obſerved; theſe will even render your 'wit more pleaſing, give a grace to 'your ordinary behaviour, and make 'the moſt trivial actions appear lovely. '—You will, my dear,' added ſhe, 'forgive my ſaying ſo much on this ſub- 'ject, ſince it is a fault that we are apt 'to overlook in ourſelves, though it be 'of the greateſt importance; and ſince 'ſo very few take care to obſerve this 'undeſcribable elegance of behaviour.

'But this, my dear,' continued ſhe, 'is not all: as he has juſtly a very high 'opinion of your wit and fine ſenſe, 'you ſhould take great care to preſerve 'that too; you muſt read, in order to 'retain a fund of pleaſing and judici- 'ous ideas. This will make him ever 'conſider you as a dear and valuable 'companion; he will then hear your 'voice with tranſport; and always find 'a new delight in your company. You 'will then have none of thoſe heavy 'ſtupid hours, in which life flags and 'ſeems at a ſtand; for while you do 'not want ſubjects to enliven every 'moment, you can never experience 'that lethargy of being, which ariſes 'from the dull converſation of two 'perſons whoſe minds are exhauſted, 'and who are obliged to be either ſilent 'or impertinent, for want of new ideas 'to entertain each other. O how happy 'will Valville find himſelf, when he 'ſees you always capable of filling up 'the ſerious, as well as the gay and 'ſprightly hours of life! What an in- 'exhauſtible pleaſure muſt he find in 'the converſation of a wife whoſe 'charms are ever new; whoſe wit is 'ever ſparkling; whoſe delicacy and 'tenderneſs appear in her whole beha- 'viour; and whoſe mind and perſon 'are both employed to preſerve his love 'and eſteem! He will feel a happineſs 'unknown to friendſhip itſelf; a hap- 'pineſs that will exiſt even beyond the 'charms of youth and beauty. The 'joys you thus inſpire will reflect back 'upon yourſelf with a double bright- 'neſs. Thus, my dear, the good ſenſe 'of each, with complaiſance and ten- 'derneſs, will render you mutually 'charming, mutually bleſſed.'

Here Mrs. Dorſin ended; when I thanked her for her advice, and told her that I reſolved to follow it in every particular. And then we agreed to rejoin the company.

As we now became ſettled in our family, we choſe Mr. De Roſand our chaplain, which was an office that he accepted of with the utmoſt pleaſure. But as Mr. De Valville thought it would be ungenerous to lay a gentleman under any reſtraint, to whom I was under ſuch infinite obligations, he choſe, inſtead of a ſalary, which might be taken away at pleaſure, and implied a kind of dependence, to ſettle upon him a pretty eſtate, which would have maintained him in a very genteel manner had he been entirely at his own expence.

We now went frequently to court, it being removed to Paris; and, about three months after our marriage, Valville was made Count De G———; which was an honour conferred upon him through the intereſt of the queen and the prime-miniſter; for her majeſty had conceived a ſingular affection for me from the time that I was firſt introduced into her preſence; and the miniſter had a very great eſteem for us both. But this honour could make no addition to our happineſs; which, before this, aroſe to as great a height as poſſible, and was now ſettled into that calm and peaceful tranquillity which is the ſummit of all human felicity. Innocence, truth, a mutual forbearance, and a reciprocal deſire to pleaſe, made our time paſs on with an unruffled ſerenity. We have had no ſeparate deſires, no contending intereſts. Our friends were ſuch as reaſon approved; perſons of a fine taſte, an excellent underſtanding, and perfect enemies to ſlander and defamation; the blackeſt, but yet the moſt faſhionable of all vices. My dear huſband's humanity, affability, and tender ſenſe of the ſufferings of his fellow creatures, fills us with that joy and inward delight, which naturally accompanies the exerciſe of thoſe humane and generous diſpoſitions, when exerted upon proper objects. What greater happineſs is human nature capable of? What more exalted pleaſures can fill the mind of man?

When we had been married about a year, I was brought-to-bed of a fine boy; a happy pledge of our mutual love. Now new ſenſations aroſe in my mind, new pleaſures and new pains; for the

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wider the mind is expanded, the greater is our capacity for affliction and diſtreſs. I have, ſince this, had three girls and a boy: but though I have been ſo happy as to bury none of them, yet there are a thouſand little tender cares and fears as well as pleaſures, which a parent feels, that are unknown to all the world beſides.

All our little offspring have the ſame place in our hearts: our earneſt endeavours are to inſpire them with an early love of virtue; to repreſent it to them in it's own amiable and attractive light; to give them, betimes, every wiſe and noble ſentiment; and to direct their unexperienced minds to a generous love of their country.

Thus, Madam, I have finiſhed the taſk you enjoined me, with all the freedom of a ſincere friend. I have laid open my heart before you; and diſcovered all it's foibles and imperfections, without the leaſt fear of injuring myſelf in your eſteem. I am now heartily weary; and ſhall therefore without ceremony conclude, and lay aſide my pen.

FINIS.

MVSEVM
BRITAN
NICVM